PER
PN
4700
.A39

39

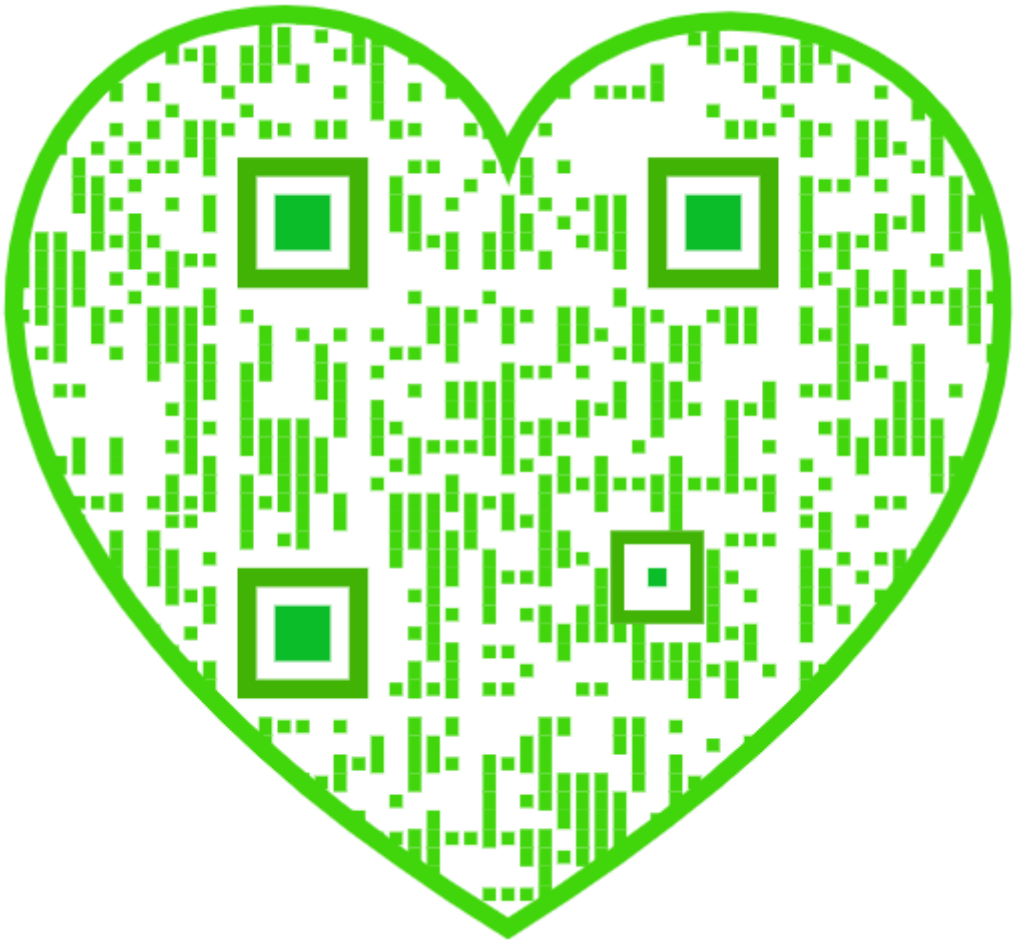
AMERICAN JOURNALISM

The publication of the
American Journalism Historians Association

OCT 2 8 2003

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE ASSOCIATION

Volume IV (1987), Number 1



AMERICAN JOURNALISM solicits manuscripts throughout the year. Articles are "blind" judged by three readers chosen from the Editorial Board of *American Journalism* for their expertise in the particular subject matter of the articles. On matters of documentation and style, *American Journalism* follows the *MLA Handbook*. Authors are asked to do the same. Four copies of a manuscript should be mailed to the following address:

Wm. David Sloan
Editor, *American Journalism*
School of Communication
P.O. Box 1482
University of Alabama
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

If the author wishes to have the manuscript returned, he or she should include a self-addressed manila envelope with adequate postage.

Inquiries on all matters should be directed to *American Journalism's* editorial and business offices in the School of Communication at the University of Alabama.

Copyright 1986, American Journalism Historians Association

AMERICAN JOURNALISM

The publication of the
American Journalism Historians Association

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE ASSOCIATION

Volume IV (1987) Number 1

AMERICAN JOURNALISM

EDITOR: Wm. David Sloan, *Alabama*
ASSOCIATE EDITORS: Gary Whitby, *Southern Illinois*,
and James D. Startt, *Valparaiso*
ASSISTANT EDITOR: Kelly Saxton, *Alabama*
BOOK REVIEW EDITOR: Douglas Birkhead, *Utah*
GRAPHICS AND DESIGN EDITOR: Sharon M. W. Bass, *Kansas*

EDITORIAL BOARD

Dave Anderson, *Northern Colorado*; Douglas A. Anderson, *Arizona State*; Edd Applegate, *Middle Tennessee State;* Donald Avery, *Southern Mississippi*; Anantha Babbili, *Texas Christian*; Warren E. Barnard, *Indiana State*; Ralph D. Barney, *Brigham Young*; Maurine Beasley, *Maryland,* John Behrens, *Utica of Syracuse*; Sherilyn C. Bennion, *Humboldt State*; Dave Berkman, *Wisconsin-Milwaukee*; Elaine Prostak Berland; Margaret A. Blanchard, *North Carolina*; James Bow; John C. Bromley, *Northern Colorado*; James A. Brown, *Alabama*; Pamela A. Brown, *Rider*; Michael Buchholz, *Texas A & M*; Gary Burns, *Missouri*; Douglas S. Campbell, *Lock Haven;* Lucy Shelton Caswell, *Ohio State*; Ed Caudill, *Tennessee*; E. Culpepper Clark, *Alabama, Birmingham*; Linda Cobb-Reiley, *Denver*; Earl L. Conn, *Ball State*; Ted Conover, *Nevada-Reno*; Anne Cooper, *Ohio*; Alfred E. Cornebise, *Northern Colorado*; Patrick Daley, *Alaska-Fairbanks*; Robert W. Davenport, *Nevada-Las Vegas*; Harold Davis, *Georgia State*; John De Mott, *Memphis State*; Wallace B. Eberhard, *Georgia*; Kathleen Endres, *Bowling Green*; Ralph Engelman, *Long Island*; R. Ferrell Ervin, *Pepperdine*; Donald Fishman, *Boston College*; Robert S. Fortner, *George Washington*; Donald D. Godfrey, *Southern Utah State;* Irvin Goldman, *Windsor*; Thelma Gorham, *Florida A & M*; David M. Guerra, *Arkansas-Little Rock*; Dennie Hall, *Central (Okla.) State*; John H. Hanson, *Temple*; Jeff Henderson, *Central Arkansas*; Jake Highton, *Nevada-Reno*; William Huntzicker; Ernest C. Hynds, *Georgia*; Phillip Jeter, *Florida A & M*; Myron K. Jordan, *Washington*; Arthur J. Kaul, *Southern Mississippi*; Samuel V. Kennedy III, *Syracuse*; Lauren Kessler, *Oregon*; Sidney Kobre; Peggy Jean Kreshel, *Georgia*; Frank Krompak, *Toledo*; Philip J. Lane, *California State, Fresno;* Bob Lawrence, *New Mexico*; Deryl R. Leaming, *Marshall*; Richard Lentz, *Arizona State*; Alfred L. Lorenz, *Loyola of the South*; Charles H. Marler, *Abilene (Tex.) Christian*; Claudia Martino, *Wichita State*; Carolyn Marvin, *Pennsylvania*; William McKeen, *Florida*; Joseph P. McKerns, *Southern Illinois;* William McReynolds, *Colorado-Boulder*; Peter Mellini, *Sonoma State*; William Ray Mofield, *Murray State*; Roy L. Moore, *Kentucky*; Kenneth B. Muir, *Radford*; Sharon M. Murphy, *Marquette*; Michael Murray, *Missouri-St. Louis*; Jack A. Nelson, *Brigham Young;* Edward A. Nickerson, *Delaware*; Marvin Olasky, *Texas*; John Pauly, *Tulsa*; Darwin Payne, *Southern Methodist*; Robert G. Picard, *Louisiana State*; Stephen Ponder, *Oregon*; Alf Pratte, *Brigham Young*; Barbara Straus Reed, *Rutgers*; Sam G. Riley, *Virginia Tech;* Jan C. Robbins, *Northern Iowa*; P. F. Roberson, *Southern;* Nancy L. Roberts, *Minnesota*; Bruce Roche, *Alabama*; Richard Scheidenhelm; Thomas A. Schwartz, *Ohio State*; Arthur Seeger, *Wisconsin-Milwaukee*; Michael D. Sherer, *Nebraska-Omaha*; Zoe Smith, *Marquette*; J. William Snorgrass, *Florida A & M*; Robert Spellman, *Southern Illinois*; Harlan Stensaas, *Mercer*; Fred R. Stewart, *Northern Arizona;* James E. Swartz, *California State-Fullerton*; Ralph J. Turner, *Marshall*; Pat Washburn, *Ohio*; Reg Westmoreland, *North Texas State*; Phyllis Zagano

AMERICAN JOURNALISM (ISSN 0882-1127) Editorial and Business Offices: School of Communication, P.O Box 1482, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

AMERICAN JOURNALISM

Volume IV (1987) Number 1

5
The Growing Interaction of the Federal Bureaucracy and the Press: The Case of a Postal Rule, 1879-1917
By Richard B. Kielbowicz

19
James Fenimore Cooper and the Law of Libel in New York
By Richard Scheidenhelm

30
The Exchange System and the Development of American Politics in the 1820s
By Robert K. Stewart

43
Book Reviews

Knudson, *Bolivia: Press and Revolution, 1932-1964*
Huey, *Rebel With a Cause: P.D. East, Southern Liberalism, and the Civil Rights Movement, 1953-1971*
Fenby, *The International News Services (A Twentieth Century Fund Report)*
Doyle, *Letters to the Press*
Altick, *Deadly Encounters: Two Victorian Sensations*
Allen, *Satire & Society in Wilhelmine Germany:* Kladderadtsch *and* Simplicissimus, *1890-1914*
Savory and Marks, *The Smiling Muse:* Victoriana in the Comic Press

The Growing Interaction of the Federal Bureaucracy and the Press: The Case of a Postal Rule, 1879-1917

By Richard B. Kielbowicz

Press-government relations entered a new phase in the last quarter of the nineteenth century as both institutions adapted to the rise of the modern industrial state. Whereas the press once had been chiefly concerned with the actions of *politicians* holding federal office, publishers now felt the growing presence of professional *administrators*. To be sure, politicians in Congress and Executive departments continued to play an important part in shaping laws affecting the press. But the federal bureaucracy increasingly decided issues vital to all industries, including the business of publishing. Administrators not only implemented laws, which required an ever larger range of discretion, but they also used their expertise to influence the policymaking process in Congress.[1] At the same time, publishers directed more of their lobbying efforts toward influencing administrators.

Of all the federal departments and agencies routinely interacting with the press, none was more important than the post office. The post office had, of course, performed services central to the operations of the press since colonial times.[2] But as the department and the publishing industry increased in size and complexity during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, post office personnel enjoyed greater latitude to administer policies fashioned by Congress. Moreover, Congress relied on the guidance of postal administrators during the policymaking process; indeed, some congressional actions simply reified in law what the post office, exercising its administrative discretion, had been doing in practice.[3] The post office moved forthrightly to implement its construction of a law when the established, influential segments of the publishing industry supported its efforts.

The changing nature of press-government relations can be illustrated by tracing the origins, administrative elaboration, and application of a single rule. In 1879 Congress created the modern second-class mail category. Among several requirements for admission to the second-class mail was the stipulation that a publication had to have a legitimate list of paid subscribers. The paid subscriber rule, which received little attention when Congress

RICHARD B. KIELBOWICZ (Ph.D., Minnesota) is an assistant professor in the School of Communications at the University of Washington, Seattle. The research for this article was conducted under contract to the U.S. Postal Rate Commission and presented in a paper to it, but the views expressed are not necessarily those of the Commission, any Commissioner, or the Commission staff. The author would like to thank Linda Lawson, Ph.D. candidate, School of Communications, University of Washington, for her assistance.

created it in 1879, became a linchpin in the post office's construction and application of postal laws in the ensuing decades. By 1917, the post office had fully fleshed out the rule, and it has changed little since despite recent challenges to its constitutionality.[4] The history of the paid subscriber rule, in short, reveals the growing autonomy of the federal bureaucracy in one realm of vital importance to the press.

Origins and Initial Interpretation of the Rule

Congress laid the statutory foundation for the paid subscriber rule in 1879 when it created the four categories of mail still used today. Although the rule was largely synthesized from earlier statutes, it also embodied principles developed in the administrative decisions of the post office.[5]

To be eligible for second-class rates, publications had to meet four conditions. The first three were technical: Publications had to be regularly issued at least four times a year from a known office of publication and printed on sheets without substantial binding. More important was the fourth condition, which focused on the publication's contents and the nature of its subscribers:

> It must be originated and published for the dissemination of information of a public character, or devoted to literature, the sciences, arts, or some special industry, and having a legitimate list of subscribers; *Provided, however,* that nothing herein contained shall be so construed as to admit to the second class rate regular publications designed primarily for advertising purposes, or for free circulation, or for circulation at nominal rates.[6]

The relevant language – that dealing with a legitimate list of subscribers and free or nominally paid circulation – was adapted from earlier statutes. Previous laws had used the language "bona fide subscribers" to reduce the number of unsolicited and often undeliverable periodicals entered in the mails, which wasted the department's resources.[7] The other pertinent clause was borrowed verbatim from an 1876 act that relegated advertising sheets and publications not requested by readers (often one and the same) to a less preferential status than second-class matter.[8]

The earliest legal construction of the term "regular and bona fide subscriber" came in the 1872 circuit court case *U.S. v. Leckey Harper*. In finding against Harper, the court defined a subscriber as one who "has subscribed himself or by some authorized agent, or has subsequently in some sufficient way ratified the subscription which may have been volunteered for him."[9] The assistant attorneys general for the Post Office Department adhered to the definition given in *Harper*.[10]

A number of post office rulings added minor refinements to the definition of a paid subscriber in the years preceding congressional enactment of the rule. Refinements included the stipulation that where someone other than the recipient purchased the subscription, the recipient had to consent or request it;[11] that subscriptions arranged by someone other than the recipient had to

be for a specific period of time (not indefinite);[12] that "a person who orders one copy of one issue of a newspaper or magazine cannot be considered a regular subscriber thereto";[13] that publications had to disclose the "terms of subscription to regular subscribers";[14] that advertisers did not qualify as regular subscribers simply by inserting ads in publications;[15] and that persons requesting free copies did not qualify as regular subscribers.[16] This proliferation of administrative rulings on a single and seemingly narrow point resulted from the ingenuity of publishers and advertisers in their efforts to qualify for the lowest postage rates. In an 1877 ruling, Arthur H. Bissell, the assistant attorney general for the post office department, reduced the thicket of considerations in defining regular subscribers to two elements: there had to be an express or implied contract between publisher and recipient, and a subscription fee had to be paid.[17]

At about the same time that he was struggling with the definition of "regular and bona fide subscriber," Bissell began work on a sweeping reform of postal laws. His proposal, which Congress more or less adopted in 1879, included the language about having a legitimate list of subscribers. Moreover, publishers in New York City, Philadelphia, and other cities approved it.[18] When Congress took up the matter there was little debate on the subscriber clause. The House post office committee added the language excluding "publications designed primarily for advertising purposes."[19] From scattered remarks during deliberations, it appears that the requirements of having "a legitimate list of subscribers" was intended to accomplish many of the same objectives as the clause excluding advertising publications from the preferred rates.[20] The Senate language, which eventually became law, excluded publications designed "for free circulation, or for circulation at nominal rates" in the same sentence that denied advertising publications admission to the second class.[21]

Congressional intent in creating the paid subscriber requirement, then, seems to have reflected a desire to bar from the second-class those publications whose sole *raison d'etre* was advertising. Most publications carried some advertising, but also invested money and effort in laying editorial fare before their readers. Publications that were simply advertising vehicles – even if they prefunctorily added some news or features – did not warrant the public subsidy conferred by admission to second-class rates. A reading of the regulations issued to amplify the 1879 classification act confirms that the paid subscriber rule was intended to exclude advertising sheets from enjoying the lowest rates.[22] Judging the *intent* of a publication was difficult at best; so Congress resorted to an indirect but concrete measure – whether there was a public demand in the form of paid subscribers. For this very reason, the post office had been using a primitive form of the rule before Congress elevated it to statutory law.

Stretching the Subscriber List

The 1879 classification act provided a new statutory basis for post office rulemaking, and the paid subscriber rule proved instrumental to administrators in reaching some of their more difficult decisions. The depart-

ment found the rule particularly useful in curtailing abuses of the provision that permitted publications to send sample copies to other than regular subscribers.[23] As a result, postal administrators amplified the meaning of the rather spare language written by Congress.

An 1881 administrative ruling shows how tempting it was for publishers and advertisers to use the sample copy privilege to evade the paid subscriber rule. The publisher of the weekly Appleton (Wis.) *Post* informed his advertisers that he planned to issue an extraordinary number of an issue. One advertiser furnished names of persons who did not subscribe to the paper, and the publisher sent them copies marked "sample." The assistant attorney general considered this issue of the *Post* to fall within the 1879 regulations that proscribed "mailing as sample copies extra numbers of their publications ordered by advertisers, or by campaign committees . . . to serve the business, political, or personal interests of the person or persons ordering the same."[24] The assistant attorney general ruled that the *Post* did not satisfy the test that sample copies be designed "to increase the subscription list and advertising patronage of his publication."[25] Counting such recipients as legitimate subscribers would be fraudulent, he advised.[26]

Although statutory law fixed no ceiling on the number of copies that could be sent to non-subscribers as samples, the department ruled "that the regular circulation of a number of sample copies largely disproportionate to the number of copies sent to actual subscribers necessarily raises the inference that the paper is designed for free circulation, or circulation at the nominal rates."[27] Thus the *National Normal*, a magazine that issued 20,000 sample copies but had only 1,500 paid subscribers, was not entitiled to pass at second-class rates.[28] Another magazine, the *Querist*, published by the owner of a "bureau of information," also failed to meet the subscriber test. It had fewer than a dozen subscribers but circulated more than 5,000 copies of each issue. The department found that the dozen subscribers were "obtained not for the purpose of deriving revenue from subscriptions, but for the purpose of enabling him [the publisher] to say that he had a list of subscribers."[29] The absence of a substantial share of paid subscribers suggested that sample issues were designed largely for advertising purposes and thus denied the preferred rates.[30]

Determining the legitimacy of a subscriber list logically entailed obtaining information from publishers. The 1879 law provided a penalty for giving "any false evidence to the postmaster relative to the character of his publication,"[31] but did not specify what information had to be submitted upon request. The department began developing guidelines in the mid-1880s.[32] Publishers seeking admission for their publications had to provide sworn written answers to a number of questions, including several that elicited information about the extent and nature of their subscription list:

> 12th. What is the greatest number of copies furnished to any person or firm who advertise in your publication? 13th. On what terms are these papers furnished? 14th. What number of papers do you print in each issue? 15th. About what number of *bona*

> *fide* subscribers (that is, subscribers who pay their own money for the publication and receive it regularly) have you to the next issue of your paper? 16th. What is the subscription price of your publication per annum? 17th. How many pounds weight will cover the papers furnished to regular subscribers? 18th. What average number of sample copies with each issue do you desire to send through the mails at pound rates? 19th. How are the names of the persons to whom you wish to send sample copies obtained by you?[33]

In applying tests, ambitious postmasters could contact some of the publication's subscribers to discover the terms of the subscriptions. The Chicago postmaster refused *Cupid's Quiver* second-class rates after he drew a sample of seventeen of the supposed actual subscribers and only two satisfied the legal definition of the term.[34] In another case, the postmaster scrutinized a magazine's promotions to learn that it obtained many of the subscriptions through offers of a premium; for 65 cents, subscribers could get the forty-page monthly magazine for a year as well as a book retailing for 75 cents or one dollar. The assistant attorney general concluded that twenty percent of the subscriptions were samples or free, and the balance were "at nominal rates, as a book is given to the subscriber of greater value than the cost of the year's subscription."[35]

The paid subscriber rule figured in the post office's 1892 decision to withdraw the second-class mailing privilege from *Printer's Ink*, organ of George P. Rowell's advertising firm.[36] The Rowell Co. gave away many copies of *Printer's Ink* to promote its work as an advertising broker. Humorist Artemus Ward, then publisher of the advertising journal *Fame*, applauded the post office's exclusion of *Printer's Ink* and other business circulars. Ward candidly stated why he and other publishers resented a loose construction of the paid subscriber rule: "Every bit of printed matter sent through the mail by a misuse of the second-class rates is a direct discount on the incomes of legitimate publishers."[37] In April 1892, the Chicago Publishers' Association, a self-described group of legitimate newspapers, urged the post office not to readmit *Printer's Ink* to the second-class mails. At about the same time, a convention of postmasters from major cities went on record favoring strict enforcement of the paid subscriber rule.[38] Not surprisingly, Rowell derided the abilities of postal authorities, once observing that the decision "of a $1,200 clerk sometimes has more weight than the opinion of the less well informed Postmaster-General."[39]

Only once did Congress reverse the post office department's application of the paid subscriber rule. In the early 1890s, the department decided that members of fraternal organizations who received magazines as part of their dues did not constitute paid subscribers.[40] Congress, at the behest of some of the affected organizations, amended the postal laws in 1894 to bring publications of fraternal and related societies into the second class.[41] A number of congressmen complained that the post office's adverse rulings misread congressional intent behind the 1879 classification law.[42] Having a

"legitimate list of subscribers" who paid more than a nominal fee expressed Congress's intent "to shut out advertising sheets," one representative said.[43]

The Loud Bill

In his annual report for 1889, Postmaster General John Wanamaker identified several abuses of the second-class privilege that hurt postal interests (meaning revenues) as well as "legitimate" journalism.[44] His report signaled the beginning of a push for reforms that lasted at least eighteen years. Some of the abuses – and proposed remedies – revolved around the construction of the phrase "a legitimate list of subscribers." In the end, the statutory language of the subscriber rule remained unchanged. But the lengthy hearings and discussions were not without consequences. The concern exhibited by Congress and segments of the publishing industry emboldened the post office to tighten the paid subscriber rule.

Representative Eugene F. Loud, a Republican from California, doggedly pressed Congress to enact legislation that would strictly construe the statutory language regarding legitimate subscribers. After conducting inquiries between 1896 and 1901, Loud concluded that it was not possible to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate second-class matter by judging a publication's content. "You can only draw a line between the subscriber and the nonsubscriber," he asserted. Consequently, the lowest rate should "continue on such matter . . . that the people want to pay for."[45] The American Newspaper Publishers Association, Agricultural Press League, and the American Trade Press Association endorsed Loud's proposal. Closer scrutiny of subscription lists, the trade press association explained, would exclude "from the mails a class of printed matter not in any sense publications based upon a list of bona fide subscribers. . . . As publishers of established newspapers, whose business is based upon a legitimate constituency of paying subscribers, they are entirely willing to forego the advantage of mailing sample copies at pound rates. . . . "[46] ANPA and the agricultural publishers advanced nearly identical reasons.[47] Despite such support, Congress failed to adopt Loud's proposal.

Although Loud failed to win the statutory reform he sought, the momentum he generated, aided by Postmaster General Charles E. Smith, prompted the department to amplify administrative remedies under existing laws. It issued a departmental order July 17, 1901, that limited publishers to sending a maximum of one sample copy for every subscriber. If the number of sample copies exceeded paid subscriptions, the publication was deemed designed for free circulation and thus ineligible for second-class pound rates.[48] When this administrative initiative was challenged, the assistant attorney general for the department advised that the law permitted such a limitation.[49]

Further Hearings, 1906

Chronic post office deficits, which many attributed to the below-cost second-class rates, brought forth another congressional joint commission in 1906. Although the Penrose-Overstreet Commission studied a wide range of

topics, it devoted considerable attention to persistent abuses of subscriber lists. Indeed something of a consensus emerged among many of the industry representatives and department officials that careful scrutiny of subscription lists was the best test of a publication's eligibility for the preferred rates. These hearings, as well as those conducted earlier by Loud, reveal how the policymaking process tried to accommodate the post office's concern for administrative efficiency and the interests of some of the press. The paid subscriber rule in part represented the convergence of administrative convenience and the commercial interests of some parts of the publishing industry.

Virtually all segments of the periodical publishing industry sent representatives to take part in the commission's hearings, which convened October 1, 1906. Many considered the subscriber list a valid measure of a publication's character and entitlement to use the second-class mails.

The National Editorial Association (NEA) recommended that great weight be placed on the subscription list in determining admissibility. The NEA spokesman deemed legitimate all subscriptions paid for by the recipient or another for a definite period.[50]

Publishers of religious materials told the commission that Sunday schools and churches subscribed for multiple copies in one person's name and the institution should therefore be considered a legitimate subscriber.[51] The Religious Weekly Publishers' Association conceded that subscribers habitually in arrears should be stricken from a publisher's list, but urged that some latitude be granted past-due accounts. The association recommended that the nature of a subscriber list be gauged by asking the publisher to submit a sworn statement about the list and the methods of securing subscribers.[52]

The rural press was especially interested in protecting subscriptions based on credit. Surveying 4,101 of its members, the American Weekly Publishers' Association found that eighty-seven percent opposed any postal law that required subscribers to pay in advance, and most agreed that questions of credit should be decided by publishers.[53] The Inland Daily Press Association (IDPA) agreed. A promise to pay the subscription should be a crucial factor in determining a publication's admission to the preferred mails. Its spokesman noted that "[t]he average country weekly newspaper sometimes carries its subscribers a year and a half to two. There may be a condition of bad crops or something of that kind." Thus the association opposed prepayment as a test of a subscriber's legitimacy.[54] Another IDPA representative suggested that the post office enforce the rule by requiring sworn circulation statements from publishers.[55]

Opposing strict application of the paid subscriber rule, the Periodical Publishers' Association applauded the vague statutory language, suggesting that its framers intended it to be elastic and construed to fit circumstances they could not envision in 1879. "Who can write a definition of a 'legitimate list of subscribers'?" the association's spokesman asked. "No man can do it. . . . [It's] beyond the power of the mind to ever write a definition which is comprehensive and satisfactory."[56] He reported on a visit to the Post Office

Department to ask for a compilation of decisions that interpreted the spare language of the law. "They told me they were embraced in circulars and letters scattered all over the Department . . . and the conclusion I reached was that they did not know any more about the real construction that had been put upon that than I did. . . . "[57]

Representing the department, Third Assistant Postmaster General E.C. Madden complained that existing law was unenforceable in part because no one could determine what constituted a "legitimate list of subscribers." Madden offered an extensive list of subscription arrangements considered by his office to violate the statutory meaning of legitimate subscribers:

> alleged subscriptions which had been secured through the means of premiums, or gifts, to the subscriber, the effect of which is to return the entire subscription price, and sometimes more; alleged subscriptions secured through clubbing arrangements, through which one or more publications are given away, thus defeating the law prohibiting free circulation, or circulation at nominal rates; alleged subscriptions actually given free upon the recipients signing an order to the publisher alleging payment or making a promise of payment upon which there was no collection and no intention to collect; alleged subscriptions in connection with the sale of goods the bill for which contains an item for subscription to the publication, which item was only a part of the price of the goods, there being no actual charge for subscription; alleged subscriptions which were themselves gifts or premiums given by the publisher in consideration of the purchase of merchandise which he had for sale in his other business; alleged subscriptions of persons whose names had been secured by the publisher from the lists of defunct publications which defaulted on their subscription contracts; alleged subscriptions based, without any order, contract, or other action on the part of the addressees, upon the sending of copies of publications with a notification that failure to direct discontinuance by a fixed date would constitute such persons subscribers; alleged perpetual subscriptions; alleged subscriptions for numbers of copies for their patrons or prospective patrons, or other boards of trade, campaign committees, candidates for office, clubs, organizations, or individuals interested in the circulation of the publication for advertising or other purposes; alleged subscriptions carried indefinitely on a pretended credit. The devices by which this requirement of the law was and is circumvented are too numerous to mention. The law does not define a subscriber.[58]

Virtually all of the schemes turned on the question of whether the ultimate recipient of the publication paid, promised to pay, or accepted the periodical as a gift for a definite period. Madden conceded that the "act of 1879 is a

Pandora's box of possibilities of executive construction" whose terms were enforced with varying degrees of rigor depending on the administering officer.[59]

The commission's report underscored the futility of scrutinizing the *purpose* of a publication as a means of evaluating its eligibility for second-class rates. Applying the statutory language that proscribed publications primarily designed for advertising purposes was pointless, the commission concluded, because "every periodical is designed for advertising purposes or no periodical is so designed."[60] Representatives of the various press associations concurred.[61] The Commission offered a bill that, it felt, emphasized technical tests rather than ones of content or purpose. Significantly, it attached much weight to elaborating what constituted a legitimate subscriber. The draft legislation would have (1) limited sample copies to ten percent of the regular subscription list; (2) abolished all premiums; (3) prohibited combination offers or required a price be fixed to each item in the combination; (4) required that publications print their regular subscription price as well as reduced rates offered for quantity sales; and (5) imposed third-class postage on copies sent "otherwise than in response to an actual demand."[62]

The Department's Crackdown and Its Consequences

The commission retreated from most of its proposals because of mounting industry opposition to recommended hikes in postage rates,[63] but the evidence it gathered pointed to a consensus on at least one matter – tightening the sample copy rule. The assistant attorney general advised Postmaster General George von Lengerke Meyer that the department could exercise its administrative discretion to limit sample copies as long as it advanced congressional goals.[64] Meyer thereupon adopted the limit proposed in the commission report – ten percent sample copies. He also announced that the department would discount as legitimate subscribers those who were in arrears for varying periods of time.[65] As with earlier administrative measures, the post office took these steps without congressional authorizations but in the wake of congressional hearings underscoring the need for such limitations.

These actions, especially requiring reasonably prompt payment from subscribers, shook sectors of the periodical industry, according to the preeminent historian of American magazines. "This effectively ended the great period of mail-order journals," Frank Luther Mott wrote. "Those that did not quit outright lowered the price to ten cents a year and made bona fide collections of that amount, and then on the basis of swollen circulations, attempted 'the big time.' A few of the better ones succeeded for shorter or longer periods."[66] The mail order journals, which had vexed the post ofice for years, began with the *People's Literary Companion* in 1869.[67] They obtained much of their circulation through premiums and other schemes that extended the subscription lists. Publishers sought maximum circulations in order to inflate advertising rates; therefore, they carried readers on their lists long after subscriptions expired. A number of these journals – for example, *Social Visitor*, *Modern Woman*, *Columbian*, *Hearthstone*, and *Mail Order Monthly* – died in 1907 and 1908.[68]

Under the new rule, publishers could send as samples up to ten percent of the weight of their mailings to subscribers. Samples sent in excess of this limit had to pay transient second-class rates, one cent per four ounces. The third assistant postmaster general boasted that this "regulation has taken out of the mails since January 1 [1908] millions of copies of publications whose 'circulation,' for advertising purposes, was swelled to the limit."[69] Ten years later, Congress recognized this administrative rule – the ten percent limit on samples – in a statute.[70]

For the first time, the department refused to count subscribers in arrears. Specifically, the rule fixed a grace period during which subscribers could renew: for dailies, within three months; tri-weeklies, six months; semi-weeklies, nine months; weeklies, one year; semi-monthlies, three months; monthlies, four months; bi-monthlies, six months; quarterlies, six months.[71] The liberal grace period for weeklies probably reflected the concerns of country editors expressed during the 1906 hearings that their subscribers often failed to pay on time because of the vicissitudes of the rural, agricultural economy.

The post office braced itself against criticism. The department argued, first, that it had not arrogated excessive power to itself. The regulations "do nothing more than define, as the law makes necessary, some of the conditions under which a list of subscribers will be considered 'legitimate' and under which the primary design of the publication may be more easily determined."[72] Second, the department's letter to Congress explained that the regulations would benefit the "legitimate" press by curbing the "class of publications, which expend little or no money for editorial matter, which circulate at rates hardly more than nominal, if not in fact nominal."[73] To show that the regulations enjoyed support, the third assistant postmaster general forwarded to Congress hundreds of favorable articles, letters, and resolutions from those connected with the press.[74]

Two 1911 administrative decisions tested the operation of these rules. The department denied the *Orange Judd Northwest Farmstead* second-class mailing privileges after scrutinizing its subscription list. Subscriptions were found to have expired, to have been purchased by banks for readers at nominal rates, or to have been claimed by the publishers without any supporting evidence. Furthermore, the department surveyed a sample of the addressees, and only 52 percent considered themselves subscribers.[75] In another case, the department curtailed the *Woman's National Weekly*'s use of its second-class permit. The post office decided that the *Weekly* did not satisfy the paid subscriber test because many copies were undeliverable, 24 percent of a sample of 3,000 readers did not consider themselves subscribers, and many subscriptions were given as gifts. The department ruled that, until the *Weekly* purged its subscription list, 24 percent of its circulation would have to go at transient rates.[76]

In 1915, the postmaster general complained that the practice of offering premiums to induce subscriptions flouted the law. He argued that the second-class privilege should be reserved for those publications that "circulated in response to a genuine public demand based on their merits."[77] He launched

an inquiry that culminated two years later in a delineation of the nominal rate rule. First, rates would be deemed nominal where the subscriber obtained a reduction of 50 percent or more from the advertised price, whether through a direct discount or a premium. This interpretation simply reaffirmed a test the department had been using for many years. The second rule discounted subscriptions obtained through agents who kept most of the money, with the publisher receiving little or no payment.[78] In 1919, the postmaster general applauded the success of these rules, which, he claimed, were welcomed by "the vast majority of publishers who were glad to be relieved of the unfair competition which formerly existed."[79]

Summary and Conclusions

At least three conclusions help explain the development of the paid subscriber rule during its formative years. The first and most subtle was the relation of the rule to the general policy objectives of the second-class mail category. More understandable were the administrative imperatives that actuated the post office. And underlying all the policymaking and administering were developments in periodical publishing, the most important of which had to do with advertising and intra-industry competition.

The advent of the paid subscriber rule in the late 1870s and its elaboration in the next decade were linked to the boom in advertising that revolutionized publishing, especially magazines dependent on the mails. Advertising increased four-fifths in the 1880s, one-third in the depression-ridden '90s, and one-half between 1900 and 1905.[80] The balance between editorial and advertising content shifted; some publishers realized that forsaking subscription revenue made good business sense because the increased circulation warranted higher advertising charges. Hence they resorted to various schemes to maximize circulation.

The Post Office Department found the paid subscriber rule serviceable in dealing with a number of problems associated with second-class mail. Although Congress at first permitted an unlimited number of sample copies to be sent at most-favored rates, the department decided that publishers used this privilege to circumvent the paid subscriber rule. It unilaterally cracked down, eventually limiting samples to ten percent of the subscribers' copies. Similarly, the post office began developing rules to give meaning to the free circulation and nominal price tests. By 1917 it had decided that readers had to pay about 50 percent or more of the regular price to count as bona fide subscribers; and that, although credit was permissible, subscribers habitually in arrears would be stricken from the list. Only once, when it expressly defined members of fraternal societies as legitimate subscribers to their associations' magazines, did Congress substantially interfere with a department rule.

Some publishers allied themselves with the department in seeking tighter rules for admission to the second class. Representatives and senators, the post office, and the publishing industry itself resorted to the term "illegitimate" to designate the periodicals that the rules were meant to bar from the lowest rates. The "legitimate" and "illegitimate" publications, of course, competed

for advertising; so the struggle over postal rules mirrored more general intra-industry competition. Congress and the department used this division to their advantage; they claimed that the "better" segments of the industry endorsed the tests of "legitimacy," notably the paid subscriber rule. Rulemaking was usually sensitive to important constituencies. Responding to the needs of the rural press, for example, the department agreed to recognize subscriptions based on credit as long as there was a reasonable expectation that payment would be made.

Although Congress exhibited some interest in the paid subscriber rule, it always seemed more concerned with rates than with fine-tuning administrative tests. Thus, amplification of the rule devolved upon the post office. Rulemaking followed a typical pattern: the post office confronted a problem, waited awhile for statutory authorization to deal with it, found none forthcoming, and then tried administrative remedies. With rare exceptions, lawmakers left the post office's initiative undisturbed; indeed, they sometimes elevated rules to statutory law.

Understanding how government actions impinged on the development of the modern press requires attention to the dynamics of the federal bureaucracy. Congress obviously continued to make laws, but increasingly it relied on the expertise of postal officials in doing so. At the same time, administrators enjoyed broader discretion in devising rules necessary to implement legislation. The implications of this development were not lost on the press; the industry recognized the expanding role of professional administrators and lobbied accordingly. These policymaking and administrative dynamics, first evident in postal affairs, became even more apparent with later developments in communication.[81]

NOTES

[1]The increasing importance of administration in government is sketched in Leonard D. White, *The Republican Era, 1869-1901: A Study in Administrative History* (New York, 1958); Lloyd M. Short, *The Development of National Administrative Organization in the United States* (Urbana, Ill., 1923).

[2]For the development of postal policies governing periodicals before 1863, see Richard B. Kielbowicz, "News in the Mails, 1690-1863: The Technology, Policy, and Politics of a Communication Channel," diss. Minnesota 1984.

[3]Short, 356.

[4]*Domestic Mail Manual*, sec. 422.221. The rule was found unconstitutional in Enterprise v. Bolger, 582 F. Supp. 228 (E.D. Tenn., 1984); but, after a circuit court decided that the U.S. Postal Rate Commission was the proper forum in which to hear the case, the rule was sustained in Opinion and Recommended Decision in the Complaint of Tri-Parish Journal, Inc., U.S. Postal Rate Commission, November 20, 1985 (Docket C85-2).

[5]For a fuller exposition of the forces that led to the 1879 law, see Richard B. Kielbowicz, "Origins of the Second-Class Mail Category and the Business of Policymaking, 1863-1879," *Journalism Monographs*, No. 96 (April 1986).

[6]Act of March 3, 1879, 20 *U.S. Statutes at Large* 359, sec. 14; hereafter cited as *Stat.*

[7]Act of March 3, 1851, 9 *Stat.* 588, sec. 2; Act of Aug. 30, 1852, 10 *Stat.* 39, sec. 2.

[8]Act of July 12, 1876, 19 *Stat.* 82, sec. 15.

[9]U.S. Circuit Court, Jan. 8, 1872, opinion reprinted in *American Newspaper Reporter*, March 4, 1872, p. 251; see also 10 *Opinions of the Assistant Attorney General for the Post Office Department* 22 (Aug. 5, 1873); hereafter cited as *Op. Asst. Att'y Gen'l.*

[10]See, e.g., 1 *Op. Asst. Att'y Gen'l* 22, quote

at 25-26 (Aug. 5, 1873).

[11]*U.S. Official Postal Guide*, Oct. 1874, p. xix.

[12]*Ibid.*, July 1875, p. 43.

[13]*Ibid.*, Jan. 1876, p. 55.

[14]*Ibid.*, Oct. 1877, p. 56.

[15]*Ibid.*, July 1878, p. 58.

[16]*Ibid.*, Oct. 1878, p. 57.

[17]1 *Op. Asst. Att'y Gen'l* 329-32 (Dec. 31, 1877).

[18]Arthur H. Bissell, *Classification of Mail Matter. Letter to the Postmaster General* (Washington, D.C., 1878); New York *Times*, Jan. 27, 1878, p. 7; Jan. 29, 1878, p. 3; *Classification of Mail Matter. Action of the Publishers of New York and Philadelphia, on the Bill Now Pending Before Congress* (Washington, D.C., 1878).

[19]*Congressional Record*, Jan. 23, 1879, p. 696; hereafter cited as *Cong. Rec.*

[20]*Ibid.*, pp. 696-97.

[21]*Ibid.*, Feb. 20, 1879, p. 1664.

[22]1879 *Postal Laws and Regulations* 73-74, secs. 186, 193.

[23]The statutory basis for sending sample copies is found at 20 *Stat.* 359, sec. 11.

[24]1 *Op. Asst. Att'y Gen'l* 565-66 (Feb. 10, 1881) quoting 1879 *Postal Laws and Regulations* 76.

[25]1 *Op. Asst Att'y Gen'l* 564.

[26]*Ibid.*, 566.

[27]1 *Op. Asst. Att'y Gen'l* 858-59 (Aug. 20, 1883).

[28]*Ibid.*, 859-60, (Aug. 20, 1883).

[29]2 *Op. Asst. Att'y Gen'l* 28 (June 17, 1885).

[30]*Ibid.* 364-65 (Aug. 3, 1886).

[31]20 *Stat.* 359, sec. 13.

[32]2 *Op. Asst. Att'y Gen'l* 8-9 (May 25, 1885); see also *ibid.*, 373-74 (Sept. 28, 1886).

[33]1887 *Postal Laws and Regulations* 141, sec. 333; for an application, see 2 *Op. Asst. Att'y Gen'l* 479-81 (Oct. 4, 1887).

[34]2 *Op. Asst. Att'y Gen'l* 443 (April 25, 1887).

[35]*Ibid.* 749-51 (Nov. 8, 1889).

[36]"Mr. Rowell's Dilemma," *The Journalist*, Jan. 30, 1892, p. 8.

[37]"Printers' Ink and the Post Office," *Fame: a Journal for Advertisers*, March 1892, pp. 10-11; "The Press and the Post Office," *ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

[38]"Postmasters and Publishers Agree," *ibid.*, April 1892, p. 42.

[39]George P. Rowell, *Forty Years an Advertising Agent* (New York, 1926), p. 159.

[40]See, e.g. 2 *Op. Asst. Att'y Gen'l* 960-61 (Oct. 15, 1891).

[41]*Cong. Rec.*, April 6, 1893, pp. 3513-14; Act of July 16, 1894, 28 *Stat.* 105.

[42]See, e.g., *Cong. Rec.*, April 5-6, 1894, pp. 3488, 3508, 3510, 3512.

[43]*Ibid.*, April 6, 1894, p. 3509.

[44]1889 *Annual Report of the Postmaster General* 43-44; hereafter cited as *Annual Report*.

[45]U.S. Cong., Joint Commission to Investigate the Postal Service, *Second Class Mail Matter . . . .*, 56th Cong., 2d sess., S. Doc. 89 (Washington, D.C., 1901), III, pp. 56-7, 67. See also E.F. Loud, "A Step Toward Economy in the Postal Service," *Forum*, Dec. 1897, pp. 471-75; E.F. Loud, "The Need of Postal Reform," *North American Review*, March 1898, pp. 342-49.

[46]Letter from association in *Cong. Rec.*, Dec. 15, 1896, p. 187.

[47]*Report of the Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Convention of the American Newspapers Publishers Association*, 1896, pp. 59, 66; U.S. Cong., Senate, *The Loud Bill*, 54th Cong., 2d sess., S. Rept. 1517 (Washington, D.C., 1897), pp. 25-26.

[48]1901 *Annual Report* 782; U.S. Cong., Joint Postal Commission, *Report*, 59th Cong., 2d sess., H. Doc. 608 (Washington, D.C., 1906), pp. 17-18.

[49]4 *Op. Asst. Att'y Gen'l* 200-02 (July 25, 1906).

[50]H. Doc. 608, 59th Cong., 2d sess., p. 147.

[51]Testimony of R.H. Boyd, *ibid.*, p. 236; Erastus Blakeslee, pp. 247-48.

[52]Testimony of Everett Sisson, *ibid.*, p. 605.

[53]Testimony of W.D. Boyce, *ibid.*, p. 312.

[54]Testimony of A.W. Glessner, *ibid.*, pp. 371-77, quote at 374; see also the remarks of Wilmer Atkinson, publisher of the *Farm Journal*, pp. 671-72; and J.H. Neff, president of the National Association of Daily Livestock and Farm Papers, p. 681.

[55]Testimony of A.K. Lowry, *ibid.*, p. 390.

[56]Testimony of William A. Glasgow, *ibid.*, p. 555.

[57]*Ibid.*, pp. 392-93.

[58]*Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

[59]*Ibid.*, p. 31.

[60]*Ibid.*, pp. xxxvii-xliii.

[61]*Ibid.*, pp. xxxvii-xxxviii.

[62]*Ibid.*, pp. xlii-xliii.

[63]*Publisher's Weekly*, Feb. 9, 1907, p. 679.

[64]4 *Op. Asst. Att'y Gen'l* 445-48 (May 9, 1907).

[65]Order No. 907, Dec. 4, 1907, TS, Miscellaneous Orders of the Postmaster General, XII, 311-26. U.S. Postal Service Library, Washington, D.C. The order stipulated that publishers had to furnish

information on fourteen points to determine whether they had a legitimate list of subscribers. *Ibid.*, pp. 312-13. See also New York *Times*, Dec. 7, 1907, p. 8.

[66]Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines*, IV (Cambridge, 1957), p. 368.

[67]See *ibid.*, pp. 364-68, for a characterization of the mail order journals.

[68]The impact of the 1907 Post Office Department rulings is confirmed by examining Mott, IV, 364-68, which shows each publication's first and last date of issue. See especially p. 365, n.54. An examination of these magazines' files at the Library of Congress revealed that they ceased publication suddenly. In late 1908 or 1909, mail-order journals were criticizing the post office crackdown. "The 'Liberty' of the Press," *Fame*, March 1909, p. 58.

[69]Third Assistant Postmaster-General, *Letter*, 60th Cong., 1st sess., S. Doc. 270 (Washington, D.C., 1908), pp. 9-10.

[70]Act of Oct. 3, 1917, 40 *Stat.* 327, sec. 1101.

[71]Third Assistant Postmaster-General, p. 10.

[72]*Ibid.*, p. 14.

[73]*Ibid.*, p. 8.

[74]*Ibid.*, pp. 21-43; with only slight variations, the same information was communicated to Congress in two other documents. See U.S. Cong., Senate, *Postal Laws and Regulations Pertaining to Second-Class Mail Matter*, 60th Cong. 1st sess., S. Doc. 204 (Washington, D.C., 1908); and Third Assistant Postmaster General, *Letter*, 60th Cong., 1st sess., H. Doc. 686 (Washington, D.C., 1908).

[75]U.S. Cong., Senate, "*The Orange Judd Northwest Farmstead*," 62d Cong., 1st sess., S. Doc. 32 (Washington, D.C., 1911); see also 5 *Op. Asst. Att'y Gen'l* 493-502 (Nov. 8, 1911).

[76]Postmaster General, *Letter*, 62d Cong., 1st sess., S.Doc. 26 (Washington, D.C., 1911).

[77]1915 *Annual Report* 36-7.

[78]1917 *Annual Report* 64-5.

[79]1919 *Annual Report* 22.

[80]Mott, IV, 20.

[81]For an example of similar dynamics in a later period, see Philip T. Rosen, *The Modern Stentors: Radio Broadcasters and the Federal Government, 1920-1934* (Westport, Ct., 1980).

James Fenimore Cooper and the Law of Libel in New York

By Richard Scheidenhelm

Libel suits brought by the novelist James Fenimore Cooper in the 1840s helped facilitate the defense of truth as justification to civil defamation actions in New York. While historians have recognized the importance of Cooper's lawsuits in a general sense, what has been missing is an appreciation of the ways that these cases affected rules of procedure central to an understanding of the ways libel suits were tried.

Two cases, *Cooper v. Barber* and *Cooper v. Greeley & McElrath*, decided by the New York Supreme Court in 1840 and 1845, respectively, concerned legal technicalities that today may seem to have been petty or arcane. A close look at these cases, however, reveals an autonomous legal system at work, where concepts central to the development of a free press were recognized almost in a haphazard fashion, through procedural wrangling rather than substantive debate.[1]

Cooper's libel suits not only forced a recognition that public opinion was a fact, to be pleaded and proved like any other fact, but also served to demonstrate the inadequacy of common law pleading rules in processing the litigation of defamation cases. The Whig editors who were the targets of Cooper's lawsuits succeeded, ultimately, in abolishing common law pleading rules through the enactment of David Dudley Field's Code of Procedure in 1849.

Cooper v. Barber

After the death of his father, Cooper published a notice in the local papers warning people to stay off his land. It read as follows:

> The public is warned against trespassing on the three mile point, it being the intention of the subscriber rigidly to enforce the title of the estate of which he is the representative, to the same. The public has not, nor has it ever had, any right to the same beyond what has been conceded by the liberality of the owners.

This notice, dated July 22, 1837, prompted a public meeting in Cooperstown to protest Cooper's "arrogant pretensions" in claiming ownership of the

RICHARD SCHEIDENHELM (Ph.D., University of Wisconsin) is an attorney with a sole practice in Boulder, Colorado. He is currently Town Attorney for Superior, Colorado.

point. Resolutions approved by the meeting demanded that "all books of which Cooper is the author" be removed from the Cooperstown library, denounced "any man as sycophant" who sought Cooper's permission to visit the point, and authorized publication of the resolutions in the local newspapers.

Elias P. Pellet of the Chenango *Telegraph* published an account of the meeting, and commented: "J. FENIMORE COOPER. This gentleman, not satisfied with having drawn down upon his head universal contempt from abroad, has done the same thing for himself at Cooperstown, where he resides." Cooper sued Pellet for libel and was awarded $400 by a jury. Andrew Barber, editor of the Otsego *Republican*, reprinted Pellet's article, and Cooper sued him, too. In 1839, a jury awarded Cooper another $400.[2]

Barber's case illustrated the difficulty of defending the truth of an opinion. Under the common law, the defendant in a civil libel or slander action who wished to rely upon the defense that the libel or slander was true was required to submit a notice of justification to the court setting forth the facts upon which he relied.[3] Barber's notice read:

> that the inhabitants of Cooperstown had, for a number of years, been in the habit of visiting the point for recreation and pleasure without objection, until the appearance of the plaintiff's notice forbidding them to do so; that they had erected a house on the point, and taken care of it and of the trees and shrubbery, and were in the daily occupation of it with the knowledge and consent of the owners; that it was generally understood that the father of the plaintiff, former owner of the point, gave permission to the inhabitants to use, occupy and enjoy it, and that it was his intention, and of those claiming title under him, except the plaintiff, that they should continue to do so without molestation.[4]

Trial judge John Willard, who heard this case at the Montgomery Circuit in May, 1839, ruled "that the matters set forth in the notice did not amount to a justification and were irrelevant." Willard announced that "without waiting for any application for that purpose," he would "exclude evidence of those matters." When Barber offered to prove the facts in his notice in mitigation of damages, Willard refused to accept the evidence.[5]

On appeal, the New York Supreme Court upheld the $400 verdict. The problem with Barber's notice was that it failed to refer to the "universal contempt" arising from Cooper's actions. Pellet's article, which Barber republished, stated that Cooper had "drawn down upon his head universal contempt from abroad" and "at Cooperstown." How was Barber to prove the truth of these statements? Barber's notice did not say.

Justice Greene Bronson, writing for the New York Supreme Court, approved of Willard's exclusion of evidence. Cooper had "seemed willing to go into the whole controversy in relation to Three Mile Point." Wrote Bronson,

Willard "was not obliged to burden himself and the jury, and to delay other suitors, by entering upon the investigation of matters which could have no legal bearing upon the question to be tried."

Because Barber's notice was not as broad as the imputation upon Cooper's character made by the libel, evidence offered pursuant to the notice was irrelevant to proving the truth of the "universal contempt" alleged by the article. Barber's evidence was not admissable in mitigation of damages, because it tended to establish the truth of the charge or to "form a link in a chain of evidence going to make out a justification." Noted Justice Bronson, "evidence going only to the damages must be such as admits the charge to be false." By entering a notice of justification, Barber had admitted malice. Having said that he intended to prove the libel true, Barber could not turn around and claim that he had made a mistake.[6]

Cooper v. Weed

The raw material of the legal battles between Cooper and the Whig press has been collected by Ethel R. Outland in *The "Effingham" Libels on Cooper* (1929) and need not be repeated here. The irresistible nature of the opposing parties, however, ought to be noted. Cooper's legal resources were formidable. He cultivated lawyers, judges, and editors as friends. His nephew, Richard Cooper, was a lawyer and handled many of Cooper's court appearances. Cooper himself became an expert in the law of libel and represented himself in some of his cases.[7]

The editors who engaged in battle with Cooper were not the sort to be intimidated by criminal indictments or civil judgments. Colonel James Watson Webb of the *Morning Courier and New York Enquirer* was tried three times for criminal libel in a case involving reviews of Cooper's works before he was acquitted in November, 1843. Horace Greeley of the New York *Tribune* considered the $200 awarded to Cooper in a civil proceeding to be "tuition." Thurlow Weed on the Albany *Evening Journal* estimated that it cost him $8,000 "to reach a point in legal proceedings that enabled a defendant in a libel suit to give the truth in evidence." For those editors for whom the stakes were too high, William Leete Stone of the New York *Commerical Advertiser* proposed the establishment of an "Effingham Libel Fund" to finance the defense of Cooper's litigation.[8]

What has not been noticed adequately concerning this warfare is the legal substance of the dispute. The law of fair comment was readily understood, even by laymen. In the opinion of the Whig editors, when Cooper made his work "the channel of disparaging remarks upon others," he opened himself to legitimate personal criticism. This view was stated clearly by Park Benjamin, editor of the *New World*, in 1839:

> Should he [an author] condemn a whole people as addicted to intemperance, would not his own habits of intoxication, if such existed, be a legitimate theme of remark and censure? If he declared that the society of which he treated was morally

> corrupt, would not his own immoralities, if such there were, become a fair subject of comment? If he made his works the vehicle and engine of his personal resentments, would not personal feeling be expected to enter somewhat into the criticism which they could hardly fail to call forth? And if he were to set up as a severe censor of manners and social usages, and to ridicule the pretensions of people without grandfathers, must he rationally expect to have his manners scrutinized and his genealogy along with it?[9]

What was "fair comment" was a jury question in criminal libel proceedings. New York's Constitution authorized the jury in such cases to determine issues of law and fact.[10] In Webb's trial, for example, it was for the jury to decide whether Webb's language related solely to Cooper as an author or travelled "out of the records and assails the man."[11] In civil libel cases, however, the law of special pleading and the rules of evidence exemplified by *Cooper v. Barber* resulted in rulings made by judges.

Writing in 1843, attorney John Wendell described the procedural rules governing a civil libel suit brought by Cooper as follows:

> The defendant sets forth in a notice of justification that the publication alleged to be libelous is a criticism upon a literary work and that upon the trial of the cause he will produce in evidence the work criticised by him, and insist that the severity of the remark complained of as libelous is fully warranted by the nature of the work reviewed, or the principles advocated by the author. . . . When a defendant who has interposed such plea or notice offers at the trial to verify the same by proof, he is met by the objection that the facts offered to be proved, *do not constitute a justification; a*nd the judge sustains the objection, and rightly so.
>
> The defendant then offers to prove the truth of the facts *in mitigation of damages*, and the judge refuses to receive the evidence either on the ground that the defendant having pleaded a justification and failed to verify his plea, is not entitled to give evidence in mitigation; or that the facts tend to establish the truth of the charge, and therefore cannot be given in evidence under the general issue. Thus the evidence being rejected both *in justification* and *in mitigation*, the defendant is cast a victim bound hand and foot on the altar of justice, and the jury hoodwinked and in total ignorance of the occasion and circumstances of the speaking of the words or publishing of the libel, are required to pronounce a verdict, at the same time being instructed that the only questions for them to pass upon are: 1. Whether the defendant is the author or publisher of the slander, and 2. The amount of damages to be awarded to the plaintiff.[12]

What Wendell's summary meant was that forty years after Harry Croswell and Alexander Hamilton established the right of a jury to determine the outcome of a criminal libel trial, the technical requirements of common law pleading prevented a trial on the merits in the civil libel proceedings brought by Cooper.

Cooper's litigation against Thurlow Weed illustrated Wendell's point. Weed had failed to appear to defend a libel suit brought by Cooper in 1841, but sent word through his attorney that his daughter had been taken ill. Cooper agreed to one day's delay, but when Weed missed the next day's train and sent word that his daughter had taken a turn for the worse, the judge granted Cooper a default judgment. Weed caught the next train and arrived in time to witness a jury awarding a judgment against him for $400.

Weed then mounted a full-scale attack. "The value of Mr. Cooper's character . . . has been judicially determined," he wrote. "It is worth exactly four hundred dollars." Referring to Cooper's unwillingness to grant him another delay due to the sickness in his family, Weed wrote that "he might as well have appealed to the reddest of the great novelist's Indians, when the war paint was on him, and the scalps of the pale faces hung reeking at his belt."

Cooper thereupon sued Weed a second time. How was one to draft a notice of justification for a statement like Weed had made? Weed's notice read that at the time of the prior lawsuit "the wife of Mr. Weed was sick and his daughter dangerously ill," and that "an appeal was made to the humanity of the plaintiff to whom the facts were stated, but that he refused to allow the cause to be delayed." When Weed's attorney attempted to introduce evidence of the facts contained in the notice at trial, Judge Philo Gridley ruled that the notice was insufficient. Weed's commentary, that Cooper's refusal to permit a continuance proceeded from an inhumane disposition as savage as an Indian's, was, in the words of the trial judge, "the foundation of an action of itself, and required a justification as broad as the charge." The only question submitted to the jury was the amount of damages, which were assessed at $200.[13]

These procedural rulings frustrated not only Weed, who faced six or seven libel suits from Cooper at one time, but the Whig press as well. As a matter of legal theory, juries could determine the "good faith" of a review, or whether attacks on the moral character of an author were fair deductions from the author's works.[14] As a matter of practice, however, efforts to justify a libel by proving "good faith" were stymied by the rules applied to notices of justification.

Cooper v. Greeley

A bipartisan coalition of Whigs and Democrats in the New York Constitutional Convention of 1846 announced the demise of common law pleading by authorizing the appointment of commissioners to revise the rules of procedure in the courts. An ardent Democrat, Cooper had aimed his suits at Whig editors. How Democratic editors came to recognize the need for

changing the rules governing notices of justification awaits the study of an 1841 case known as *Dolloway v. Turrill*. For present purposes, it is enough to understand that the rules of common law pleading explained so clearly by John Wendell and dramatized by Cooper's litigation could gore Democratic and Whig editors alike.[15]

For Whig editors, Cooper's lawsuits forced a recognition that in order to change the law it was necessary to comprehend the legal problem. These were not cases where misguided judges excluded evidence only to be reversed upon appeal. How did one prove the truth, for example, that Cooper was held in "universal contempt" or that his disposition was "inhumane" and "savage as an Indian's"? Much of the credit for changing the legal system must go to Horace Greeley, who understood the rules of procedure well enough to satirize them.

Greeley learned the legal rules through direct experience. Cooper first sued him for publishing a letter describing the default judgment Cooper had obtained against Weed in 1841. Greeley represented himself during the trial, and found himself unable to contest anything but the amount of damages, which the jury found to be $200.

Considering the money "tuition," Greeley began writing about the trial and the law. In one article, he imagined that Cooper was sued for asserting that Greeley was "not handsome."

> **Fenimore.** – "I offer to prove by this witness that the plaintiff is tow-headed, and half bald at that; he is long-legged, gaunt and most cadaverous of visage – *ergo*, homely.
>
> **Judge.** – How does that follow? Light hair and fair face bespeak a purely Saxon ancestry, and were honorable in the good old days: I rule that they are comely. Thin locks bring out the phrenological developments, you see, and give dignity and massiveness to the aspect; and as to slenderness, what do our dandies lace for if *that* is not graceful? *They* ought to know what is attractive, I reckon. No, sir, your proof is irrelevant, and I rule it out.
>
> **Fenimore** (the sweat starting). – Well, your Honor, I have evidence to prove the said plaintiff slouching in dress; goes bent like a hoop, and so rocking in gait that he walks down both sides of a street at once.
>
> **Judge.** – *That* to prove homeliness? I hope you don't expect a man of ideas to spend his precious time before a looking glass. It would be robbing the public. "Bent," do you say? Isn't the curve the true line of beauty, I'd like to know? Where were you brought up? As to walking, you don't expect "a man of mark" . . . to be quite as dapper and pert as a footman, whose walk is his hourly study and his nightly dream and perfection the sum of his ambition! Great ideas of beauty *you* must have! That evidence won't answer."[16]

Greeley's argument focused upon the idea of an opinion. Answering "the common inquiry – Why don't you justify on one of these cases?" Greeley responded "that no state of facts will be allowed to form a justification. . . . We state certain things which A.B. has done which seem to us very mean, and we say they *are* mean," wrote Greeley. "We undertake to justify and the Court stops us: 'You can't give that in evidence sir! – if it is all true, it doesn't prove that A.B. was mean.' "

" 'Shut up!' is thundered from the Bench; 'haven't I told you that no such testimony could be received? You are only showing malice and aggravating damages by offering it.' So the defendant has nothing to do but fold his robes around him and die with decency." Greeley concluded:

> The fundamental, fatal error in this procedure, as we think the reader will have perceived, was made when any such expression of opinion was allowed to be treated as a libel at all. That step taken, all evil and oppression follow in its train, and each new decision is a fresh outrage, aggravating error into wrong and injustice into tyranny. There must be some remedy for this misapplication of law, or the Press becomes the crouching slave of every vice, a spaniel at the feet of humanity and villainy.[17]

Cooper sued Greeley again for his account of the trial for which he had already paid tuition. This second suit, which appears in the law reports under the name of *Cooper vs. Greeley & McElrath*, was the significant case in determining the outcome of Cooper's war with the press. More than any other case, it established the idea of public opinion as a fact subject to proof in a courtroom like any other fact. In so doing, Greeley did more than provide a way to correct the defective pleading at issue in *Cooper v. Barber*. If expressions of opinion were to be treated as libels, then, under some circumstances, expressions of opinion could be raised in justification of a libel. If an individual's opinion could not amount to a justification, perhaps the opinion of groups of individuals could.

Cooper's lawsuit complained of the following language: "Mr. Cooper will have to bring his action to trial somewhere. He will not like to bring it in New York, for we are known here, nor in Otsego for he is known there." Cooper's claim concerning this language alleged the meaning of this writing to be "that the plaintiff in consequence of being known in the County of Otsego, was in bad repute there, and would not for that reason, like to bring a suit for libel in that county."

Greeley's lawyer, William Henry Seward, entered a special plea to the declaration stating:

> that the plaintiff at the time of the publication, and long before, resided in the County of Otsego, and was known to many citizens

> of that county; and being so known had acquired and then had the reputation of a proud, captious, censorious, arbitrary, dogmatical, malicious, illiberal, revengeful and litigious man, wherefore the said plaintiff was in bad repute in the said County of Otsego, in consequence of which he did not like to and would not bring an action against the defendants, for words, to trial in the said County of Otsego.

In 1845, the New York Supreme Court decided that this notice of justification was sufficient. Justice Freeborn Jewett wrote that he did not see "in what other manner a justification could be interposed" to defend a libel based upon a charge of bad reputation. "In the nature of things, it would be impracticable for the defendant to spread upon paper the particular manifestations of pride, captiousness, malice, etc.," which formed Cooper's character, "and to prove that his public reputation was the consequence of such conduct. . . . Reputation is the estimate in which an individual is held by public fame in the place where he is known," Jewett continued. "And the existence of a good or bad reputation is, I think, a fact which may be directly put in issue."

Public opinion might "exist without any just foundation." The grounds of "such public estimate of reputation" were "manifestly incapable of being put in issue." Having charged Cooper with having acquired an "odious" reputation in Otsego County, Greeley's words were actionable, but Greeley was not bound to show in justification that Cooper's reputation had been justly formed or that "such public estimation was correctly made."

The significance of this case lay in the court's recognition that public opinion was a fact, the truth of which could be alleged by a libel defendant in a notice of justification and proved at trial. Jewett attempted to limit the ruling by distinguishing between a charge that an individual possessed a generally poor reputation and a charge that a person possessed the reputation of "having committed some particular offense, or with the neglect of some duty." In the latter case, the defendant could only justify the truth of the plaintiff's reputation by proving him guilty "of the precise offense referred to in the charge."[18]

Cooper's Legacies

This judicial recognition of public opinion came too late to save common law pleading. In defending Greeley, Seward had argued that "public opinion is higher than courts, and will, when is necessary, correct even judicial errors."[19] The strength of this argument may be seen in the enactment of David Dudley Field's Code of Procedure in 1849, a code described by its chief proponent as radical and inevitable.[20]

Whatever the merits of Cooper's complaints, his lawsuits mobilized Whig editors, in Weed's words, "to seek relief by legislative and constitutional modifications of the law of libel, modifications which deprived judges of the power to oppress obnoxious defendants, and permitted defendants upon trial

for libel to prove the truth of their accusations, and show that their motives were justifiable."[21]

A strong undercurrent of opposition to the law of libel promulgated by the New York Supreme Court may be seen in proposals offered by delegates to the 1846 Constitutional Convention. Ambrose Jordan, who represented Webb in 1843 during his second trial for criminal libel, sought to prohibit judges "from arguing, advising, instructing, or expressing any opinion upon any matter of fact on the trial of any issue in any civil case." Ira Harris, who was elected as a judge of the New York Supreme Court in 1847, proposed to give defendants in civil defamation actions the right, "upon reasonable notice," to prove "any facts tending to show that the alleged slander or libel is true, or that he uttered or published the same believing it to be true." In Harris's view, juries were to have "the right of deciding upon the effect to be given to such evidence, either in justification or in mitigation of damages." Alvah Worden, a lawyer and Seward's brother-in-law, sought to add a section to the Constitution that read: "No person shall be prejudiced in any civil or criminal prosecution for libel, by reason of any false pleading."[22]

These proposals were unsuccessful, not for the reason that the Convention determined that changes in the law of procedure were not needed, but because the Convention was concerned, primarily, with the structural reorganization of the judiciary. Before it adjourned, the Convention directed the Legislature to provide for the appointment of commissioners responsible for recommending revisions in the rules of procedure applicable to all courts of record in New York.[23]

Section 165 of Field's code changed the law of special pleading that had prohibited Weed and Andrew Barber from presenting evidence of what they had reason to believe. The code provided that in actions for libel or slander, "the defendant may, in his answer, allege both the truth of the matter charged as defamatory, and any mitigating circumstances, to reduce the amount of damages; and whether he prove the justification or not, he may give in evidence the mitigating circumstances."[24]

Referring to the presumption of the common law that entering a plea of justification operated as an admission of malice, and to the exclusion of evidence in mitigation "if the proof falls short of a strict technical justification," Field described Section 165 as "intended to remedy what we suppose to be a most flagrant injustice to the defendant in actions of this nature. We can see no reason why in this more than in any other case," he explained, "an arbitrary rule should be interposed, by which the defendant should be deprived, not only of the benefit of, but should actually be prejudiced by, a partial defense."[25]

Section 165 of the new code provided an epitaph to Cooper's war against the Whig press. In the words of an 1844 *American Law Magazine* review, the decisions of the New York courts preventing evidence of circumstances and motives to be submitted to juries had threatened "to open the doors of this action [libel] to an extent as yet we trust undreamed of — to effect a revolution in the private fortunes of individuals, a transfer of funds from

hand to hand – in comparison with which, the developments of the South Sea bubble, or of John Law's banking speculation, would sink into insignificance."[26]

By 1851, the year of Cooper's death and the publication of the seventh edition of James Kent's *Commentaries on American Law*, Cooper's lawsuits were considered as an aberration, a temporary mistake. The editor of the *Commentaries* characterized the Cooper trials as "not correctly decided, so far as evidence of the matters contained in the notice . . . was not permitted to go to the jury, to explain, mitigate and repel the inference of malice. . . . Unless the jury are permitted to take cognizance of the question of malice, and of all the circumstances attending the publication, grievous injustice may be inflicted upon a defendant."[27]

NOTES

[1]The term "autonomous legal system" is taken from Stanley N. Katz, Barry Sullivan, and Captain Paul Beach, "Legal Change and Legal Autonomy: Charitable Trusts in New York, 1777-1893," 3 *Law and History Review* 51, 54-55 (1985). See, in particular, their comment that "only a limited range of choices is open to lawyers and judges at a particular time." In some areas of law, this is true "however strong the perceived demands of social necessity."

[2]The most complete account of Cooper's litigation against the Whig press is found in Ethel R. Outland, *The "Effingham" Libels on Cooper: A Documentary History of the Libel Suits of James Fenimore Cooper Centering Around the Three Mile Point Controversy and the Novel HOME AS FOUND, 1837-1845* University of Wisconsin Studies in Language and Literature, No. 28, Madison, 1929). Cooper's notice, the Cooperstown meeting, and Cooper's lawsuits against Pellet and Barber are discussed by Outland, pp. 31-51.

[3]The requirement that a notice of justification was to be submitted by those wishing to rely upon the defense that a defamatory statement was true was announced in a 1744 English case, *Underwood v. Parks*, 2 Strange 1200. The rule had been followed consistently by New York judges prior to Cooper's lawsuits. *Root v. King and Verplanck*, 7 Cowen 613 (N.Y. Sup. Ct., 1827); *King and Verplanck v. Root*, 4 Wend. 113 (N.Y. Ct. of Errors, 1829).

[4]John L. Wendell, Introduction to Thomas Starkie, *A Treatise on the Law of Slander and Libel*, p. 36 (reprint of 2nd English edition of 1830; Albany, 1843).

[5]*Cooper v. Barber*, 24 Wend. 105, 106 (N.Y. Sup. Ct., 1840).

[6]*Cooper v. Barber*, 24 Wend. at 107-08. There is nothing in Wendell's *Introduction to Starkie* or in Wendell's report of the Supreme Court's decision to suggest that Barber's notice attempted to prove the truth of the "universal contempt" referred to in Pellet's article.

[7]Cooper's friends included Chief Justice Samuel Nelson of the New York Supreme Court, who lived in Cooperstown. In 1824, Cooper founded the Bread and Cheese Club of New York City, a group that included such lawyers as Gulian Verplanck, Judge John Duer, and James Kent, and such editors as William Cullen Bryant and Charles King. Daniel Webster was a frequent guest at club functions. Martha J. Lamb, *History of the City of New York*, Vol. II, pp. 706-07 (New York, 1880).

[8]For Webb, see James L. Crouthamel, *James Watson Webb: A Biography*, pp. 69-103. For Weed, see Harriet A. Weed, ed., *Life of Thurlow Weed, including His Autobiography and a Memoir*, Vol. I, pp. 521-29 (Boston, 1884); Outland, pp. 104-29, 191. For Stone, see Outland, pp. 130-68.

[9]*New Yorker*, Feb. 23, 1839; quoted by Outland, p. 81. Outland's concluding chapter, "The New York Libel Law and Cooper's Suits," pp. 169-200, touches upon the issue discussed in this paper only tangentially.

[10]This provision originated from *People v. Croswell*, 3 Johns. Cas. 337 (N.Y.Sup.Ct., 1804), and had been part of New York's Constitution since 1821.

[11]Taken from Judge Willard's charges to the jury during Webb's first two trials; quoted by

Outland, pp. 242-47; 186-90.

[12]Wendell, *Introduction to Starkie*, pp. 27-29. By the "general issue," Wendell was referring to a simple "not guilty" plea. Under the common law, the absence of a notification meant that the defendant in a defamation case admitted the falsity of the words alleged to be defamatory. In such cases, the defendant, who had not admitted malice by filing a notice of justification, might under certain limited conditions present evidence concerning what he had reason to believe. *Gilman v. Lowell*, 8 Wend. 573 (N.Y.Sup.Ct., 1832); *Mapes v. Weeks*, 4 Wend. 659 (N.Y.Sup.Ct, 1830).

[13]Wendell, *ibid.*, pp. 39-42; Outland, pp. 104-29.

[14]*Cooper v. Stone*, 24 Wend. 434 (N.Y.Sup.Ct., 1840); Thomas R. Lounsbery, *James Fenimore Cooper*, pp. 200-230 (Boston, 1883); Ernest P. Seelman, *The Law of Libel and Slander in the State of New York*, Vol. I, pp. 283-85 (Brooklyn, 1964).

[15]*Dolloway v. Turrill*, 26 Wend. 383 (N.Y.Ct. of Errors, 1841).

[16]New York *Tribune*, Dec. 24, 1842; quoted by Outland, pp. 124-26.

[17]New York *Weekly Tribune*, Dec. 24, 1842; quoted by Outland, pp. 124-26.

[18]*Cooper v. Greeley & McElrath*, 1 Denio 347, 348-50, 364-67 (N.Y.Sup.Ct., 1845). Seward's argument in this case was published in G.E. Baker, ed., *Seward's Works*, Vol. I, p. 391, under the title "The Law of Libel" (Boston, 1887).

[19]Seward, "The Law of Libel," pp. 407-08.

[20]A good summary of Field's codes may be found in "The Codes of Procedure, Civil and Criminal, in the State of New York," 23 *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine and Commercial Review* 67, 68-74 (1850).

[21]Harriet A. Weed, ed., *Life of Thurlow Weed, including His Autobiography and Memoir*, Vol. I, p. 526.

[22]*Debates and Proceedings in the New-York State Convention for the Revision of the Constitution*, p. 827 (Harris); p. 814 (Worden). For the comments of Ambrose Jordan, see Charles Z. Lincoln, *The Constitutional History of New York*, Vol II, p. 110 (Rochester, 1906).

[23]*Debates and Proceedings*, pp. 817-18.

[24]*The Code of Procedure of the State of New York*, Section 165 (Albany, 1849).

[25]*First Report of the Commissioners on Practice and Pleadings*, pp. 156-57 (Albany, 1848).

[26]"Critical Notice," II *American Law Magazine* 252, 255 (Philadelphia, 1844).

[27]James Kent, *Commentaries on American Law*, Vol. I, p. 618, N. (a) (7th ed., Boston, 1851).

The Exchange System and the Development of American Politics in the 1820s

By Robert K. Stewart

"The Editorial Life" –

> . . . we seated ourselves at the . . . table, on which were scissors, paste-dish, pen and ink, the indispensible implements of our profession, to commence our ordinary labour. And first, to prepare the subject matter of the next day's daily Journal. Having cast our eye over Mr. Lang's New York Gazette, and Mr. Dwight's Daily Advertiser, (our invariable standards for news from that city, notwithstanding the high repute of Mr. Stone's Commercial) and clipped out a few paragraphs, the Washington papers were next put in requisition. An article in the National Journal, or the National Intelligencer, we undertook to *remanufacturing* (giving the Journal, or the Intelligencer credit for the *raw material*) . . . [1]

Prior to the invention and adoption of telegraph technology in mid-nineteenth century America, most newspaper editors relied on the exchange system for news of events from beyond the country border. To encourage the circulation of news and information, the U.S. Postal Act of 1792 formalized a practice common during the colonial era of bestowing on editors the privilege of exchanging their newspapers with other editors free of charge through the mail. With only rudimentary tools, "scissors, paste-dish, pen and ink," etc., editors filled their papers with accounts of events from across the state, country, even the world, all copied from exchange partners' newspapers. According to one study, at least ten to twenty-five percent of an early nineteenth century "country" (i.e., county and local) newspaper derived from exchange sources, more than half of the news hole.[2]

But the exploitation of the exchange system as a tool for communication is no more evident than during the political upheaval of the 1820s. During the decade, long-established political traditions crumbled, and in their place arose new methods for winning power. Presidential nominating caucuses yielded to new methods of campaigning, to be waged largely in the pages of the hundreds of American "public prints." By the end of the decade the accepted campaign strategy held that editorial support in the nation's capital was vital for presidential candidates.[3] Perhaps as important, when linked with

ROBERT K. STEWART is a Ph.D. candidate in communications at the University of Washington. This article was adapted from his Master's thesis.

other newspapers through the exchange system, a centrally located party organ under the watchcare of a trusted political editor enabled candidates to supply a steady diet of authoritative campaign news to state and local newspaper editors and their readers.

Of the partisan innovators of the decade, the promoters of Andrew Jackson were among the earliest and most adept at using newspapers and the exchange system to their own political ends.[4] In so doing, they nurtured a budding party apparatus that enabled the systematic waging of a war of words and ideas from the largest cities to the most remote outposts of the country. This study analyzes patterns of using and sharing political and non-political information by eighteen newspapers within the Jacksonian newspaper network during critical periods of the 1824 and 1828 presidential campaigns.[5]

The Jackson Exchange Network

Jacksonian editors were active exchange partners. During the eight-week period just before the 1824 election, seven Jackson newspapers together republished nearly 150 political articles from newspapers received by exchange, collectively citing more than seventy-five different titles. Key Jackson newspapers located in Pennsylvania and Tennessee, often the recipients of direct financial remuneration from the Jackson campaign coffers, served as the hub of the exchange network and consequently were cited most frequently.[6] Likewise, these same quasi-official campaign newspapers used more editorial material from other newspapers. The case of Jacksonian editor Stephen Simpson and his Philadelphia-based *Columbian Observer* illustrates the Jackson camp's newspaper strategy.

Simpson initially backed Henry Clay for president, but shifted the editorial support of his newspaper to General Jackson in the spring of 1823 when Clay's popularity in the state faded.[7] Securing a reliable newspaper in Philadelphia mitigated the impact of having no newspaper in Washington. Clearly, Jacksonians in the early part of the decade believed securing editorial support in Pennsylvania vital. Surveying the chances of his candidate in the 1824 campaign, a key Jackson strategist reported: "I have always said, and so have thought, that whoever Pennsylvania shall support, will most probably be elected."[8]

In the fall of 1823 Jacksonians embarked on a fund-raising drive to subsidize the "Editor in Phila."[9] The investment soon paid rich dividends, as Simpson's paper became increasingly valuable to the Jackson cause. During the eight weeks of September and October, 1824, the seven Jacksonian newspapers included in the 1824 sample for this study copied more political items from Simpson's *Columbian Observer* than from any other source (see Table 1). Partisan newspapers such as the *Columbian Observer* and the Nashville *Gazette* (also subsidized by the Jacksonians) frequently provided little other than political material, as none of their exchange partners bothered copying non-political items from those journals. Yet, exchange networks by no means were exclusive along political lines, as many

newspapers provided varying combinations of political and non-political news. Some of the latter category were not Jacksonian newspapers, nevertheless they exchanged with Jacksonian newspapers.

Table 1. Political items (PI) and non-political items (NPI) republished from exchange sources in seven Jacksonian newspapers during September-October, 1824.*

Exchange sources:	PI	NPI
Columbian Observer	18	--
National Journal	11	15
Richmond Enquirer	9	4
National Intelligencer	7	16
New York Statesman	5	9
Crawford City Gazette	5	--
Nashville Gazette	5	--
Pittsburgh Gazette	4	2
Niles Register	4	--
Philadelphia Gazette	3	6
Franklin Gazette	3	2
National Advocate	3	1
National Republican	3	--
Eastern Star	3	--

*Includes titles cited a miniumum of three times as sources for political items (PI).

Most Jacksonian editors in the 1824 sample copied more non-political items from exchange sources than they did political items (see Table 2), this despite the critical period of electioneering examined for this study.

Not surprisingly, the 1824 newspapers also cited fewer political sources than non-political sources. Clearly, the exchange system in 1824, even when employed for political ends on occasion, was not primarily a channel for political communication.

As for the outcome of the election, of the quarter of the electorate that voted in 1824, a plurality chose Jackson over the other three presidential contenders. Candidates then as now had to win an outright majority of the votes in the electoral college to become president. Jackson's inability to muster a majority threw the election into the House of Representatives. Whatever victory he had achieved by winning more votes than any other candidate was moral if not real, since Jackson had little chance of winning an election in the House.

Appropriately, a last-minute effort to avert inevitable defeat took the form

Table 2. Average number of political items (PI), non-political items (NPI), political sources (PS), and non-political sources (NPS) used per issue in 1824 sample.

Newspaper titles:	PI	NPI	PS	NPS
Charleston Mercury	.70	2.04	.45	1.21
Cincinnati Advertiser	2.06	.56	1.28	.44
Harrisburg Chronicle	2.63	5.00	2.13	4.00
Knoxville Register	1.00	4.67	.67	3.56
Nashville Republican	1.56	1.11	1.00	.89
New Jersey Emporium	1.67	1.67	1.22	1.44
Sparta Review	2.86	3.86	1.57	2.71
Weighted means:	1.78	2.70	1.19	2.04

of a newspaper campaign, with the Jackson exchange network mobilized to keep "a HEAVY AND CONSTANT FIRE IN THE PRESSES, for the purpose of COMPELLING the People's Representatives to speak the language of the People" and choose Jackson.[10] Instead, the members of the House elected John Quincy Adams in perhaps the most controversial election of American history.

The positive lessons of the 1824 election, however, were not lost on the Jackson contingent. The general's popular success at the polls in 1824 confirmed not only his appeal to the American public – after all, Jackson was one of the few remaining great if somewhat controversial American military heroes – but also the proficiency of newspapers, linked through the exchange system, to cast the foundation of a national campaign organization. Yet, Jacksonian editors in 1824 clearly had just begun to explore the various applications of the exchange system for electioneering.

In the wake of their defeat in the House of Representatives the Jacksonians wasted little time in revising their newspaper strategy for the 1828 race. The 1828 newspaper arsenal of the Jacksonians would include a Washington newspaper to serve as a national clearinghouse for campaign news. In early 1826 a St. Louis editor, Duff Green, received loans from prominent Jacksonians to purchase the Washington-based *United States Telegraph*.[11] In addition, the ranks of the state and local newspapers for Jackson swelled, as newspapers all across the country joined the Jackson bandwagon.[12] New Jackson correspondence committees formed throughout the country, with local Jackson organizers often serving the dual role of Jacksonian editor and committee chairman. In the highly charged political atmosphere, the 1828 Jackson newspaper network dwarfed all previous political newspaper efforts.[13]

In the newspapers included in both the 1824 and 1828 samples, the use of exchanged political items jumped from an average of about one and a half

items per issue in 1824 to more than four in 1828 (see Table 3). The number of political sources increased as well, from an average of about one per issue in 1824 to more than two in 1828 (see Table 4). Clearly, during similar periods of electioneering, Jacksonian newspapers in 1828 that also were members of the Jackson exchange network in 1824 far exceeded their previous partisan efforts on behalf of the Jackson campaign. At the same time, the use of non-political items and sources decreased, from an average of more than two and a half items (from more than two sources) per issue in 1824 to less than two items (from less than two sources) per issue in 1828.

The increased editorial partisanship in 1828 over 1824 is even clearer in the case of the entire sample of Jacksonian newspapers. The seven papers sampled

Table 3. Summary of per issue averages for political items (PI) and non-political items (NPI) used by five sample newspapers published both in 1824 and 1828.

	1824		1828	
Newspaper titles:	PI	NPI	PI	NPI
Charleston Mercury	0.70	2.04	2.63	4.26
Cincinnati Advertiser	2.05	0.56	6.44	0.28
Harrisburg Chronicle	2.63	5.00	4.00	4.00
Knoxville Register	1.00	4.67	5.67	0.11
Nashville Republican	1.56	1.11	2.69	1.08
Weighted means:	1.59	2.68	4.29	1.94

Table 4. Summary of per issue averages for political sources (PS) and non-political sources (NPS) used by five sample newspapers published both in 1824 and 1828.

	1824		1828	
Newspaper titles:	PS	NPS	PS	NPS
Charleston Mercury	.45	1.21	1.63	2.42
Cincinnati Advertiser	1.28	.44	2.39	.28
Harrisburg Chronicle	2.13	4.00	2.63	3.25
Knoxville Register	.67	3.56	2.33	.11
Nashville Republican	1.00	.89	1.69	.85
Weighted means:	1.11	2.02	2.36	1.63

Table 5. Summary of per issue averages for political items (PI), political sources (PS), non-political items (NPI), and non-political sources (NPS) for 1828.

Newspaper titles:	PI	PS	NPI	NPS
Albany Argus	5.66	2.23	2.64	1.23
Argus of Western America	4.33	2.11	1.22	1.11
Charleston Mercury	2.63	1.63	4.11	2.42
Cincinnati Advertiser	6.44	2.39	.22	.28
Eastern Argus	3.82	2.29	2.94	2.24
Harrisburg Chronicle	4.00	2.63	4.00	3.25
Kentucky Gazette	4.56	2.33	1.00	.89
Knoxville Register	5.67	2.33	.11	.11
Macon Telegraph	2.56	1.44	6.00	4.44
Nashville Republican	2.69	1.69	1.08	.85
New Hampshire Patriot	7.54	3.62	1.00	.92
New York Evening Post	2.10	1.00	4.85	2.03
Pittsfield Sun	6.89	3.11	4.78	2.89
Richmond Enquirer	8.67	2.67	3.56	1.72
Rochester Daily Advertiser	2.69	1.54	4.23	3.00
United States Telegraph	11.84	4.88	1.00	.44
Weighted means:	5.13	2.37	2.67	1.74

for 1824 averaged just less than two political items obtained through the exchange system per issue (see Table 2), while the sixteen Jackson newspapers in 1828 used an average of more than five per issue (see Table 5).

The increase reflects Jackson's own heightened appreciation of the exchange system for politicking. On one occasion he commanded an aide to print

> one hundred extras, [to be] circulated to every printer and Jackson Committee in Ky, Ohio, Indian[a], Illinois, Mississippi, Louisiana and Alabama – and to the north [–] Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York and New Hampshire. Those you may send me I shall distribute in Virginia and Ky.[14]

Even among those newspaper editors in 1828 who used less than the average amount of exchange material, all used far more political exchange material than the average in 1824.

Exchanges in the U.S. Telegraph

Perhaps the most significant addition to the Jackson newspaper network in 1828 was Duff Green's *U.S. Telegraph*. It served as a national bulletin board

of Jacksonian "political intelligence," a centralized clearinghouse of political exchange items from the smallest to the largest Jackson newspapers. During the heat of the 1828 campaign a political correspondent of Green clearly calculated the value of reprinting in the *Telegraph* a defense of Jackson against a particular political attack. He wrote:

> The antidote ought to accompany or immediately follow the poison – Should you have any additional light on this subject, it may be added, all which the other Jackson papers will copy in time to prevent further injury to the cause in which we are so honorably and jealously engaged.[15]

In each issue of the thrice-weekly *Telegraph*, Green used an average of nearly twelve political items gathered from exchanges, by far the highest of any Jackson newspaper, from nearly five political sources, also the highest of any Jackson newspaper (see Table 5). Not surprisingly, Green drew upon a broader pool of exchange sources. Of the 119 newspaper titles from which Green copied political items during September and October of 1828, thirty-five were cited in none of the other newspapers examined. At least once over the course of the entire campaign, a local or "country" Jacksonian editor likely stumbled across an article from his newspaper republished in Green's national newspaper, earning the article a national (albeit temporal) circulation via the exchange system. Not surprisingly, political articles from the *Telegraph* frequently found their way into the columns of other newspapers during the September-October, 1828, stretch (see Table 6). And, just as Green used very little non-political exchange material – well below the average for the 1828 sample – other editors rarely reprinted non-political news from the *Telegraph*.

As important as the *Telegraph* was to the Jacksonians' partisan exchange network, however, the most frequent sources of exchange news – both for political and non-political news – in 1828 remained in the commercial centers of the eastern seaboard, primarily New York (see Table 6). The editor of Boston's *New England Galaxy* suggested that news from New York deserved his attention first, followed by news from the nation's capital.[16] Newspapers from New York state – in particular New York City – on the whole provided a substantial portion of the country's political and non-political news through the exchange system. In addition to the high number of political items copied by the exchange partners of the New York *Evening Post* and the New York *Enquirer*, thirty-seven non-political items were copied from each of these two newspapers by the other sixteen during the two month period prior to the 1828 election, more than any other sources.[17] No doubt, such figures reflect the importance of New York City as the center of commerce in early nineteenth-century America.

Aside from a few prominent local newspapers, the state and national newspapers tended to be the most frequently cited newspapers in the Jackson network. They spoke for the state and national level party organizers, the

Table 6. Political items (PI) and non-political items (NPI) republished from exchange sources in sixteen Jacksonian newspapers during September-October, 1828.*

Exchange sources:	PI	NPI	State
New York Enquirer	92	37	NY
Albany Argus	72	5	NY
United States Telegraph	70	1	DC
New York Evening Post	69	37	NY
American Sentinel	66	--	PA
Boston Statesman	66	15	MA
Argus of Western America	57	2	KY
Nashville Republican	42	1	TN
Kentucky Gazette	38	--	KY
Baltimore Republican	37	2	MD
Troy Budget	28	--	NY
Louisville Republican Advertiser	25	--	KY
Philadelphia Gazette	25	8	PA
Rochester Daily Advertiser	20	5	NY
National Intelligencer	19	19	DC
New Hampsire Patriot	18	--	NH
Philadelphia Mercury	18	--	PA
Cincinnati Advertiser	15	--	OH
New York Morning Courier	15	15	NY

*Includes titles cited a minimum of fifteen times as sources for political items.

nerve centers within the national Jackson political party structure. They mediated the party's information flow, while the local newspapers enabled the Jackson camp to monitor events in the political trenches of the nation.

Exchanges in State and Local Newspapers

The impact of the exchange system on local and regional communications in the 1820s is clear. Through exchanges, ideas that otherwise were geographically-bound achieved national recirculation. Not only did the exchange system produce a vertical flow of political information (i.e., from national to state to local levels, and vice versa), but, at the state level in particular, a horizontal or inter-state flow. While Jacksonian state newspapers such as the Albany *Argus* received and sent intelligence to national level newspapers (section [a] in Table 7) and set the editorial tone within their own state or region (section [b] in Table 7), they also exchanged with other state newspapers across the country (see section [c] in Table 7).

Table 7. Reciprocal exchanges of political news between the Albany *Argus* and other Jackson newspapers in 1828 sample.

Column A is the number of political items republished in the Albany*Argus* from newspapers listed in [a] through [c].

Column B is the number of political items from the Albany *Argus* republished in newspapers listed in [a] through [c].

Column C is the sum of columns A and B and measures total exchange activity.

	A	B	C
[a] National newspaper(s)			
U.S. Telegraph	9	19	28
[b] Local newspaper(s) (in New England)			
New York Evening Post	20	9	29
Pittsfield Sun	1	13	14
Rochester Daily Advertiser	15	4	29
[c] State newspaper(s)			
Argus of Western America	4	2	6
Nashville Republican	3	4	7
New Hampshire Patriot	1	4	5
Richmond Enquirer	15	10	25*

*This very high level of exchange activity probably is a vestige of the former New York-Virginia alliance established during the rule of the Republican Caucus.

In this sense, state newspapers operated as an inter-state as well as intra-state channel for Jackson campaign intelligence, integrating state-level efforts with those of the national campaign.

The local editor, however, less interested in exchanging with other local editors – particularly from other states – relied on state and national newspapers from the bulk of his exchanges. For example, the amount of news copied from state, national, and other local level newspapers in the *Kentucky Gazette* (column A, Table 8) compared to the frequency with which those newspapers in turn copied from the *Gazette* (column B) generally suggests that the exchanges of the local Jackson editor were more vertical (i.e., national to state to local) than horizontal (local to local).

Table 8. Reciprocal exchange of political news between the Kentucky *Gazette* and other Jackson newspapers in 1828 sample.

Column A is the number of political items republished in the Kentucky *Gazette* from newspapers listed in [a] through [c].

Column B is the number of political items from the Kentucky *Gazette* republished in newspapers listed in [a] through [c].

Column C is the sum of columns A and B and measures total exchange activity.

	A	B	C
[a] National newspaper(s)			
U.S. Telegraph	3	7	10
[b] State newspaper(s)			
Albany Argus	1	4	5
Argus of Western America	4	3	7
Nashville Republican	2	3	5
New Hampshire Patriot	4	-	4
Richmond Enquirer	-	6	6
[c] Local newspaper(s)			
Cincinnati Advertiser	1	2	3
Knoxville Register	1	2	3
New York Evening Post	2	2	4
Pittsfield Sun	-	1	1

The total exchange activity between the *Kentucky Gazette* and any other newspaper (column C, Table 8) is a simple way to approximate the strength of the dependency for news. Clearly, the *Gazette* exchanged with national and state newspapers more frequently than with other local newspapers. In the case of the Cincinnati *Advertiser*, another local Jackson newspaper, the figures suggest a similar conclusion. In both cases the local editors exchanged more frequently with national than state, and more frequently with state than local party newspapers (see Table 9).

Perhaps such editors had little need to communicate directly with other "country" editors, since the national and state newspapers republished much news from these sources anyway. More likely, the astute local editor, usually a

ranking member of the local political establishment, was more concerned about using his newspaper to reach both his local subscribers, and, through the exchange system, the attention of national and state newspaper editors – some of the key politicians of his party.[18] Due to their propagandistic value, reports of victories in the nation's political trenches stood a far better chance of being well-received – and republished in partisan newspapers – than did stories of defeat at the hands of the opposition.

Table 9. Reciprocal exchange of political news between the Cincinnati *Advertiser* and other Jackson newspapers in 1828 sample.

Column A is the number of political items copied in the Cincinnati *Advertiser* from newspapers listed in [a] through [c].

Column B is the number of political items from the Cincinnati *Advertiser* copied in newspapers listed in [a] through [c].

Column C is the sum of columns A and B and measures total exchange activity.

	A	B	C
[a] National newspaper(s)			
U.S. Telegraph	14	5	19
[b] State newspaper(s)			
Albany Argus	1	1	2
Argus of Western America	7	1	8
Nashville Republican	6	1	7
New Hampshire Patriot	1	1	2
Richmond Enquirer	7	1	8
[c] Local newspaper(s)			
Rochester Daily Advertiser	-	1	1

Conclusion

During the 1820s, the press came into its own as an instrument for political communcation. When Tocqueville visited the United States in the early 1830s, the heyday of the Jackson era, he marveled at the political clout of the American press – not of any single newspaper, but the press collectively, united through exchanges.[19]

In 1824 and 1828, Jacksonians used newspapers to reach voters across the

nation with the hope of dethroning establishment politicians. The Jackson exchange network, and others that followed, were pragmatic ways to articulate common campaign goals to a substantial portion of the electorate. And, according to one "country" newspaper publisher, during the latter years of the decade newspaper readers had come to expect their newspapers to be full of articles copied "principally from other papers with which they exchange."[20]

For the Jacksonians, the 1824 election represented a near-miss. In 1828 they redoubled their efforts, winning an overwhelming victory over incumbent John Quincy Adams. While only one quarter of the American electorate had bothered to vote in the 1824 presidential election, four years later, without any significant increase in the American population, the number of voters participating in the contest between Adams and Jackson doubled.[21] With the aid of the exchange system, political communicators in the 1820s not only helped alter important institutions — including the press — but the degree to which Americans paticipated in the political life of the nation and, in so doing, communicated with and learned about Americans in other parts of the country.

NOTES

[1]From Buckingham's *New England Galaxy*, reprinted in the Nashville *Republican*, Nov. 20, 1824.

[2]Milton W. Hamilton's *The Country Printer* (New York, 1936). His category of news called "acknowledged as copied" fits with the definition for exchange items used in this study. See his APPENDIX II, TABLE 1, pp. 311-12.

[3]For discussion of the Washington, D.C., press during the 1824 election see William E. Ames and Dean Olson, "Washington's Political Press and the Election of 1824," *Journalism Quarterly*, 40 (1963): pp. 343-350; Ames, *A History of the National Intelligencer* (Chapel Hill, 1972), pp. 128-150.

[4]Gerald J. Baldasty, "The Press and Politics In the Age of Jackson," *Journalism Monographs*, 89 (August 1984): p. 5.

[5]The eighteen newspapers comprising the sample for this study include the Albany *Argus*, *Argus of Western America*, Charleston *Mercury*, Cincinnati *Advertiser*, Harrisburg *Chronicle*, Kentucky *Gazette*, Knoxville *Register*, Macon *Telegraph*, Maine *Eastern Argus*, Nashville *Republican*, New Jersey *Emporium*, New Hampshire *Patriot*, New York *Evening Post*, Pittsfield *Sun*, Richmond *Enquirer*, Rochester *Daily Advertiser*, Sparta *Review*, and *U.S. Telegraph*. The 1824 sample includes seven of these titles; the 1828 sample includes sixteen titles, five of which overlap with the 1824 sample. Of the 1824 sample, four were state-level newspapers (which served as the state party's official organ) and three were local (i.e., county-level) newspapers. Of the 1828 sample, seven were local, eight state, and one national in scope. For the 1824 sample a total of 107 newspaper issues were examined; for the 1828 sample 282 newspaper issues were examined. In this study "political items" are defined as those dealing with domestic politics, whether directly related to the presidential election or not. "Non-political items" include all other editorial matter.

[6]Two Tennessee newspapers, the Nashville *Gazette* and the Nashville *Republican*, received direct financial support from the Jacksonians. See Charles G. Sellers, Jr., "Jackson Men with Feet of Clay," *American Historical Review*, 62 (1957): p. 539; for pleas in support of the *Republican* see John Henry Eaton to John Overton, Nov. 16 and 20, 1824, Claybrook Collection, Tennessee State Library.

[7]See the *Columbian Observer*, Nov. 9, 1822; Kim T. Phillips' excellent article on Jackson's popularity in Pennsylvania, "The Pennsylvania Origins of the Jackson Movement,"

Political Science Quarterly, 91 (1976): pp. 489-99.

[8]Eaton to Overton, Jan. 20, 1824, Claybrook Collection, Tennessee State Library.

[9]Eaton to John Coffee, Nov. 10, 1823, Dyas Collection, Tennessee State Library.

[10]William B. Lewis to Stephen Simpson, Dec. 17, 1824, Louisville *Daily Focus*, Oct. 18, 1831.

[11]See the memo in John Spencer Bassett's *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, Volume III (Washington, D.C., 1928), pp. 301-02.

[12]Among the most prominent Jackson newspapers formerly loyal to William Crawford were the Richmond *Enquirer* and the Albany *Argus*. Duff Green himself ardently supported Calhoun prior to the consolidation of the Jackson-Calhoun ticket in the spring of 1824. The *Argus of Western Kentucky* supported Clay in 1824, as did the Kentucky *Gazette*.

[13]The increased burden of the exchanges on the postal system probably led to attacks on the system from some members of the Senate Committee on the Post Office, made up of anti-Jackson Democrats save Senator Richard M. Johnson from Kentucky. The committee proposed an amendment to "strike out the provision which allows the exchange of papers between newspaper printers, free of postage." The amendment was "negatived without a division" by the full Senate. Whether the committee wished to save taxpayers' dollars or undermine the strength of the Jackson party by restricting its obvious editorial advantage gained through the exchange system is unclear from the record. See the Debates in Congress, Jan. 28, 1825, and March 1, 1825.

[14]Jackson to Lewis, March 8, 1828, J. Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.

[15]William Duncan to Duff Green, Sept. 12, 1828, Duff Green Papers, National Archives, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[16]Reprinted in the Nashville *Republican*, Nov. 20, 1824.

[17]The figure for the New York *Evening Post* probably is deflated, since its own presence in the 1828 sample of newspapers examined in the study reduces the population of newspapers in the sample that might copy from it from 16 to 15 (logistics preclude it from copying articles from itself). Had the *Evening Post* not been among the 16 papers in the sample, chances are good that the aggregate number of non-political citations for the entire sample would have been higher than 37.

[18]Hamilton, p. 229.

[19]Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, (1835; Vintage House ed., 1945).

[20]*Orange County Patriot*, June 11, 1827.

[21]In 1824, a total of 356,038 votes were cast, representing nearly 27 percent of the electorate; in 1828, a total of 1,155, 350 votes were cast, representing 57.6 percent of the electorate.

BOOK REVIEWS

Bolivia: Press and Revolution, 1932-1964. *By Jerry W. Knudson.* Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1986. 488 pp. Index. Paper.

At first glimpse of this volume's title, many readers may be tempted to pass it over unless they have a special interest in the history of Bolivian or Latin American journalism. However, to do so would be a mistake and a loss to the reader.

Knudson's book is not a history of Bolivian journalism for the period indicated in the title – although necessary background on Bolivian journalism is provided – nor is it just a history of Latin American journalism. Instead, the author, who is a professor of communications at Temple University, attempts to examine the social history of the interaction between the press and Bolivian society that culminated in the Bolivian National Revolution, a period of democratic leftist government from 1952-1964. In doing so, Knudson addresses the larger theme of the role of the press, or mass communication, in social change. Overall, the book is very successful in helping the reader understand the intricacies of the role of the press in social change. Knudson's work could well serve as a model for similar studies of other nations, including the United States.

Knudson is a fine writer in the best sense of the term, and he deftly handles the intricacies of the details over the course of the volume's 488 pages. The study moves along crisply from its beginning, which examines the generation of dissident writers in the Chaco War in 1932, to the overthrow of the Bolivian National Revolution by the military in 1964. The author states clearly in the introduction that his work is a study of newspapers specifically because he is dealing with a period before the advent of television in Bolivia and a time for which transcripts or tapes of radio broadcasts were lost, destroyed, or never existed. In particular, Knudson concentrates on the oligarchial, i.e., the conservative, elitist, and/or pro-capitalist, press, and revolutionary newspapers of La Paz, and *Los Tiempos* of Cochabamba, a newspaper with the second largest circulation in Bolivia in its time. Knudson supplements his newspaper and document research with very valuable oral history interviews with major figures of the period. The research must have been tedious and painstaking, but the author and his readers should consider the product well worth the effort.

In the end, Knudson concludes that the newspaper helped to define the complicated social and political issues of the period, i.e., granting the universal vote, pushing through nationalization of the major tin mines, and legitimizing agrarian reform, but that they were less successful in redefining the role of the military in Bolivia although they did focus public attention on it.

Joseph P. McKerns
Southern Illinois University, Carbondale

Rebel With a Cause: P.D. East, Southern Liberalism, and the Civil Rights Movement, 1953-1971. *By Gary Huey.* Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1985. 340 pp. $24.95.

Paradoxical P.D. East was a courageous, perhaps even foolhardy, Mississippi weekly newspaper editor who dared to speak out against segregation during the racially tense 1950s and 1960s, but oddly enough his voice hardly was heard in his own state.

The problem was that East lost the few readers he had in his own community. He became somewhat of a celebrity among Northern liberals and at the same time was largely ignored in Mississippi.

Gary Huey, a history professor at Louisiana State University at Eunice, examines the life of the enigmatic East in this interesting biography. Huey points out that East was poorly equipped to crusade against segregation in a hostile environment because of his scant education, low social status, and lack of financial support.

"It made his struggle for success and acceptance extremely difficult, if not impossible," Huey writes. "By contrast, journalists such as Mark Ethridge and Ralph McGill had the wealth and prestige of large newspapers to support them. Jonathan Daniels, Hodding Carter, and Lillian Smith enjoyed comfortable incomes and privileged social status which insulated them in part from the worst excesses of their racist opponents. East clearly labored under distinctly different conditions than practically all other southern liberals."

Percy Dale East was born November 26, 1921, and grew up poor in a succession of Mississippi sawmill towns. After his expulsion from Pearl River Junior College, he worked for a bus company and as a railroad ticket clerk before entering the Army in 1942. He was unable to adjust to military life and was given a medical discharge after undergoing psychiatric treatment.

After editing two newspapers, he founded his own weekly, the *Petal Paper*, in a small, incorporated community several miles outside Hattiesburg. This was in November of 1953 and East tried mightily to please everyone and offend nobody.

"P.D. East began publishing the *Petal Paper* for one basic reason: to make money," Huey writes. "He never intended to involve himself in any fight for human rights or the airing of controversial opinions. At first he did not even have an editorial policy, and when one finally emerged it was totally inoffensive."

At first, East tried to straddle the fence on racial issues, but he soon became disgusted with the extremists who were in control of Mississippi. In 1956, he published a satirical advertisement ridiculing the White Citizens' Council. In this famous "jackass ad," East said members of the White Citizens' Council were "promised the freedom to interpret the Constitution as they saw fit; to feel superior without brain, character, or principle; and to exert economic pressure."

This advertisement was widely reprinted, and East continued to use humor and ridicule to attack white supremacists. Such courage was costly, and by

1959 East had lost all 2,300 of his local subscribers and nearly all his advertising. Huey writes that the newspaper survived through subscription drives and donations from such liberal supporters as John Howard Griffin, Lillian Smith, Ralph McGill, Harry Golden, and Steve Allen. East also earned fees occasionally from speaking on various campuses.

Plagued by debts, ill health, and marital problems, East died on December 31, 1971, at the age of fifty after moving to Fairhope, Alabama. In this well-researched book, Huey recognizes East's shortcomings but contends that East "made a significant contribution as both a symbol and participant" in the civil rights movement.

James S. Featherston
Louisiana State University

The International News Services (A Twentieth Century Fund Report). *By Jonathan Fenby.* New York: Schocken Books, 1986. 275 pp. $19.95.

In the United States the debate over the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) has faded into a quiet conversation among a few interested persons. That is too bad. For the issues swirling around NWICO are not going to go away through avoidance or withdrawal. The issues cut across the spectrum of socio-economic and political organization and are crucial to dealing with worldwide turmoil, inequity, and, ultimately, peace.

At one level, Jonathan Fenby's book is a welcome addition to the accumulating literature about the wire services and their role in NWICO. Sensitively and thoughtfully, the author carries out his aim which is "to present a group portrait of four of the world's most important suppliers of information . . . " (p. xi). The book also is well written and presents some new data, especially financial, about international news flow. But mainly it keeps the NWICO discussion in the United States flickering.

For the book comes as a major disappointment for anyone hoping to find new answers — or even clues — to the old question of how can international news flow be improved. Fenby asserts there are no alternatives to Agence France-Presse, Associated Press, Reuters, and United Press International. Together these agencies easily dominate the international news scene. To see any alternatives, he writes, "is an illusion that can be sustained only by the belief that change must always upset the status quo." (p. 218). How's that again? It seems to say don't fiddle with our status.

There's more. After a sympathetic recitation of the charges against the wire services — distortion, bias, monopoly — Fenby says it's surprising they perform as well as they do (which sadly may be true!) and that "As monopolistic exploiters of world-media markets, the agencies cut a sorry figure" (p. 124). Now it's time to feel sympathy for the burden the Gang carries. Where do we send contributions?

The book's last words sum it all up: " . . . the four major agencies simply turn out to be the best practical means of ensuring that the world receives a reasonable flow of information about itself" (p. 248).

I don't think this book was supposed to be a whitewash. But I'm not sure. In the foreword M.J. Rossant, director of the Twentieth Century Fund which commissioned the study, wrote that the Fund wanted a comprehensive analysis of the major international wire agencies as a response to Third World nations who have sought redress of imbalance of flow through international agencies, especially UNESCO.

Fenby's method is basically journalistic. He reviews many of the previous studies about news flow and, in fact, adroitly cites flaws in some of them, particularly the content analyses. He's also gleaned useful financial data – no easy task – conducted his own content analysis, and managed to obtain interviews with a number of key agency officials.

Early he establishes the link between business and journalism. He acknowledges the world's "lopsided" distribution of wealth and power. One theme in the discussion of the history of the news agencies is their almost exclusive interest on the business side, the struggle to gain the competitive edge. The concept of responsibility clearly comes to be defined by stockholders.

The problem of the book may be the same problem of much of Western-style journalism, namely, an assumption that so-called "objectivity" is attainable. Or as Fenby puts it: "A single, objectively verifiable account of each event is the bedrock of agency reporting" (p. 63). The sobering realization is that that's probably true. And therein lies the rub. If messages create our environments, then we have to be concerned with what motivates those who create our messages.

Fenby may not have been the best choice for this assignment. He formerly worked with Reuters, which proved a convenient pipeline into that organization. One can't help but wonder how that association may have influenced the work. Fenby now is Bonn correspondent for *The Economist* of London.

In the final analysis, Fenby has produced a creditable book with no surprises and little that is new or significant.

Kenneth Starck
University of Iowa

Letters to the Press. *By Arthur Conan Doyle (edited by John Michael Gibson and Richard Lancelyn Green).* Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1986. 376 pp.

Fans of Arthur Conan Doyle will find John Michael Gibson and Richard Lancelyn Green's *Letters to the Press* both fascinating and insightful. Most of us likely think of Doyle as the creator of Sherlock Holmes. As his letters show,

however, he was much more than this. Like his alterego Watson of the Holmes series, he was a prosperous physician before falling in with sleuths, literary or journalistic. Doyle led the kind of life that most of us merely dream of. Born in 1859 into relative poverty and his father's problems with alcohol, he studied at Stonyhurst and Edinburgh University; went, as a young man, on walking tours through Scotland; visited Arran and the Isle of May; had his first story published in *Chambers Journal* when he was twenty (publishing his first letter to the press the same year); went to sea on a Greenland whaler when he was twenty-one; had a medical practice by the time he was twenty-three; and had published stories in numerous literary magazines by the time he was thirty. In 1891, at the tender literary age of thirty-two, he began publishing the Holmes stories in the *Strand Magazine*. These were so successful as to allow him to give up his medical career for full-time devotion to writing.

The activity and excitement which characterized Doyle's early years remained as typical traits throughout his life. With the success of the Holmes stories came both fame and money. Doyle visited the United States on a lecture tour in 1894, becoming acquainted with noted American writers. He spent a year in Switzerland, devoted to skiing and to helping his wife recover from an illness. In 1895 he was a special correspondent to the *Westminster Gazette* for the impending British war with the dervishes. In 1898 he was a correspondent for the Central News Agency in a confrontation (which never materialized into war) with the French. In 1899 he served in a field hospital in the South African War, later writing a popular pamphlet on the war. At one time or another he was into rifle clubs, home defense, motoring, ballooning, politics, and, continually it would seem, journalism. He investigated crimes for the *Daily Mail* and *Daily Telegraph*, covered the 1908 Olympic Marathon for the former, covered the funeral of Queen Victoria for the *New York World*, and wrote on subjects such as Irish Home Rule and the sinking of the Titanic for the papers of his day.

Before and during World War I, he used his literary powers as a tool of propaganda in the war effort, writing a series titled "To Arms" for the *Daily Chronicle*, and another similar series for the *Evening Standard*. In 1916 he was converted, like many of the notable literary figures of his day (including the great Irish poet William Butler Yeats), to Spiritualism; and a weekly column titled "Psychic Notes" soon came to be published under his name in the *Sunday Express*.

From age twenty to the day of his death (on which was printed the last of his letters to the *Daily Telegraph*), Doyle wrote letters to the press. These are witty, saucy, informative, argumentative, and never boring. They evince the same bright and lively style which has made the Holmes series so alluring to millions of readers. Green and Gibson are to be commended for their gathering together and editing of these neglected letters by an increasingly popular and beloved English author. The editors have chosen to make uniform the opening vocative of each letter and have omitted only those letters which would seem to be redundant. Most of these come from Doyle's

later years, especially the period of his coversion to Spiritualism and a consequent and logical, if tiring, didacticism.

Gibson and Green's research has taken them to British, North American, and Continental libraries and to the private papers and scrapbooks of Doyle. Their work is careful and unobtrusive, and, apart from the slight change in vocative (all the letters in the book now begin with "Sir," whereas some of them originally began with "Dear Sir" or a variant), all the letters appear as they originally appeared. The book contains an interesting biographichal sketch of Doyle's life, from which, the reviewer gratefully acknowledges, a good deal of the foregoing information has been adapted for this review. The millions of Holmes/Doyle fans will find this book hard to put down.

Gary Whitby
Southern Illinois University, Carbondale

Deadly Encounters: Two Victorian Sensations. *By Richard D. Altick.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986. 164 pp. Paper, $13.95.

Altick, a respected Victorian scholar – his 1973 book *Victorian People and Ideas* is required reading in Victorian studies, and he also has written *Victorian Studies in Scarlet*, as well as *The English Common Reader*, which looks at the emergence of a mass reading public in nineteenth century England – has produced with *Deadly Encounters* a work of particular interest to those interested in cultural studies in journalism.

Altick looks at the 1860s in England, a decade when sensation became a craze, as he puts it, when the "sensation itself . . . was the sensation," and focuses on press coverage of two violent crimes that occurred in London in July 1861. Both crimes contained elements common to sensation. One involved a retired British Army major, his mistress, blackmail and murder by means of a savage beating; the other, a class scandal, involved a Frech nobleman attempting to kill his son to get an inheritance. Press coverage of these two crimes, claims Altick, ushered in "the Victorian Age of Sensation" and set the tone for the decade.

More than half of this short book is devoted to detailing that coverage, and showing that in covering these two crimes and the trials that followed them, newspapers mixed fact and fiction, were full of speculation, relied on hyperbole, and were, therefore, terribly unreliable sources of information about either the events or the people involved. Excerpts from newspaper articles provide clear illustration of just how style and content worked together to entertain and astound the hungry reading public, just as plays and novels were already doing so. As Altick says, "Trial by newspaper was a fact of Victorian life."

Cultural and historical detail are presented in this part of the book, but one wishes for a more smoothly integrated discussion of the cultural connections and significance. Instead, the reader must wait for the last two chapters,

which make up only twenty-seven pages of the book. In those chapters, "From Fact to Fiction" and "The Dawning Age of Sensation," Altick places the decade and the two crimes into a broader cultural and specifically literary context, shows how studying journalism can open doors to cultural interpretation and understanding, and makes his most interesting observations and conclusions.

For example, Altick suggests that these cases were so fabulous that they are clear instances in which reality outstripped fiction by presenting more elaborate plots with, as the *Sunday Times* declared, "monstrous improbabilities." Or, as Altick states: "Each . . . was a case of life imitating life – indeed, outdoing – art." It wasn't that such crimes had never occurred before (although some of the papers tried to suggest that these crimes typified the decadent spirit of the age), but that suddenly a popular press was there to document and exaggerate those "sensational" crimes, a fact that Altick doesn't quite make clear enough.

The newspapers were very much aware that fiction and the imagination would have to strain to keep up with such actual incidents and regularly said as much. The papers compared the cases to the popular romantic narratives of the period, with their melodrama, incredible coincidences, and unbelievable action. The case of the Army major was particularly striking because the major, shot by a man who apparently tried to blackmail him, struggled with the man and beat the man's face into "a mass of pulp." If a fiction writer reproduced in story form the facts of this case, stated the *Sunday Times*, "the fiction would be condemned as an absurdity."

In reviewing the editorial comment on the cases, Altick discovered that "one paper after another ended on the note on which they begun, their assertion that the case belonged more appropriately in the treasury of the literary imagination than the annals of real-life crime." A *Times* editorial on the case "was written a a journalistic analysis of a real-life situation (but) verged on literary criticism with psychological underpinnings."

Thackery even commented on the cases, showing a novelist's appreciation for them, and pointing out their connection to "melodramatic pieces" in the theater. These plays were starting to be called "sensation dramas" in the 1860s, and it may have been the first time that the word "sensation" was applied to a prose of art form. Through stage productions, Altick says, the term sensation, however, had been recognized for some time and had even been noted and deplored in Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798, but London's stage and press gave it a name and new meaning, and a host of Victorian writers, including Thackery, Dickens, George Eliot, Trollope, and Hardy employed sensational elements in their work.

Perhaps the newspapers made it seem that life was imitating art as depicted on stage and in fiction, but as Altick indicates, the cultural flow went in both directions. Stage productions based on both incidents later appeared, and the case involving the major particularly appealed to playwrights and it "became a prototype of stage fights in later Victorian blood and thunder drama."

All this is well-documented by Altick, but, unfortunately, he only obliquely

explores why the 1860s was a decade of sensation. To do so would have required a much stronger consideration of the journalistic context and the role of newspapers in London society, as well as a broader and more detailed look at the literary forces at work. For instance, at the same time that newspapers featured sensationalized real events, the theater was staging sensation dramas as realistically as possible, trying to bring audiences closer to actual experience, resorting to mechanical innovations and bringing real fire engines and real animals on stage. What, then, was the role of realism in contributing to, if not bringing about, sensationalism? And how does this tendency toward sensation in several art forms relate to the fact-fiction tension that has been extant since the advent of printed prose?

Altick does, however, do an admirable job of demonstrating a relationship between journalism and the stage, and he further indicates how sensationalism was a cultural force that affected and shaped several forms of literary expression, showing in the process how newspaper journalism can reflect and influence the sensibility of an age.

Thomas B. Connery
College of St. Thomas

Satire & Society in Wilhelmine Germany: *Kladderadtsch* and *Simplicissimus*, 1890-1914. ***By Ann Taylor Allen.*** Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1984. 264 pp. Index, Cloth, $25.00.

The Smiling Muse: Victoriana in the Comic Press. ***By Jerold Savory and Patricia Marks.*** Philadelphia: The Art Alliance Press. London and Toronto: Associated University Press, 1983. 249 pp. Index of proper names. Cloth, $40.00

Humor and satire are notoriously difficult to explain. When analyzed their flavor, like the smell of vanilla, is often lost. For *serious* historians, including art historians, humor and satire, whether in prose or in pictures, serves mainly as decoration. It's frivolous, ephemeral, and in the case of comic drawings, certainly not "high art." As a result most scholars have neglected the numerous satirical journals that flourished in the latter half of the nineteenth century in Europe and North America or treated them as ornament for their analyses of the era. Yet these magazines were read by the rapidly growing urban classes and the elites. *They* demonstrated their appreciation by their growing patronage, and, in the case of the German elites, repression: ". . . they considered joking a serious business," as Ann Taylor Allen effectively demonstrates in *Satire and Society in Wilhelmine Germany.*

Happily, perceptive scholars such as Allen now are exploring the impact of these magazines and their images, seeking to relate the uses and impact of

humor and satire on the formation of public opinion, on ideas and style, and on changing social and political mores. Semiologists, anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists are deconstructing signs and symbols. When coupled with related scholarship on propaganda and advertising and attention to stylistic gender differences generated by feminists such as the art historian Marina Warner [See her recent *Monuments and Maidens* (London, 1985)], these various approaches provide the student of the press with a variety of useful insights into Victorian and Edwardian satirical iconography and prose.

Allen treats humor as an active force for social change helping to clear the way for new ideas and perceptions in Wilhelmine Germany, the united German Empire cobbeled together by Bismarck and the Prussian army and bureaucracy. Complex tensions between classes, compounded by a rapid transformation into a modern state, were exacerbated by a reactionary elite that prohibited, restricted, or discouraged more direct forms of protest (p. xi). The literary and visual humor of the *Witzblatter* – satirical magazines – became in Allen's judgment "a vent for protest and . . . a force for social change" (p. 1).

Allen concentrated her attention on the impact of two liberal journals: the more traditional *Kladderadtsh* published in Berlin since 1848; and *Simplicissimus*, which emerged in 1896 in Munich, out of the late nineteenth century artistic and literary European *avant garde*. She has read widely in the other *Witzblatter* of the era, such as the *Munchener Fliegende Blatter*, the liberal *Jugend*, the Ulstein weekly *Ulk*, and the socialist *Der Wahre Jacob*. Allen makes a convincing case that her choices, especially *Simplicissimus* before the 1914-18 war, were arenas for trenchent social criticism and artistic innovation that influenced a growing audience. Allen claims: "Not yet in competition with the other media, the press at the turn of the century exercised a more potent influence on public opinion [in Germany] than perhaps at any time before or since" (p. 3). Their artistic style and wit certainly carried beyond the Wilhelminan middle and upper classes to Russia, France, Britain, North America, and even to Australia, where Norman Lindsey, Will Dyson, and David Low were learning their trade.

In her first chapter, gracefully titled "A Playful Judgment," Allen ably sums up the few, largely unsatisfactory, often laughable attempts made by Freud, Bergson, Obrdlik, Koestler, and others to analyze the social and political function of humor. She reminds us that authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, such as Mussolini's Fascists or the Nazis, ruthlessly supressed joking and satire in print or performance. *They* recognized that these visual and verbal symbols were agencies for resistance and change. Had she also used the insights of Ernst Gombrich on comic art and some of the more reflective caricaturists such as David Low, this book would have been even more informative. In chapter one she analyzes the origins and development of the two *Witzblatter* and their role in German society between 1890 an 1914. Chapters three through five are devoted to interpretation of their comments on Wilhelmine politics, which they treated as theatre; on war

and militarism and sex and satire, including their ideas about love and the "New Woman," the family, and an aside or two on pornography. In chapter six, "The Assault of Laughter," she describes and illustrates the satirists' attack on the rigid German educational system, the hypocrisy of the German clergy, and other "purity preachers." Both journals made, she discovers, relatively few allusions to the problems or social status of Jews, due to "a sense of false security shared by most German Jews in the Wilhelmine period" (p. 194).

At the turn of the century these *Witzblatter*, though differing in style and emphasis, agreed on the need for educational reform and the liberalization of authoritarian Christianity, whether Catholic or Protestant. When faced with the *fin de siecle* artistic innovations, they emphatically disagreed. *Simplicissimus* then as today was regarded by its admirers and critics as "an important organ of artistic modernism" (p. 199). *Kladderadtsch*, dominated in the nineties by older men, feared the new art, and, sadly, came to fear most any innovation. Like *Punch* in England, by the first decade of the twentieth century it had become culturally conservative.

Professor Allen's book is a useful window into Wilhelmine culture and politics. Historians of journalism and the media will find it particularly helpful because she demonstrates the role and impact of satire in and on an authoritarian society, one that was to collapse after World War I with tragic consequences. Her translations deserve to have the German appended so that the bilingual reader can appreciate them. More cartoons, coupled with analyses, especially from *Simplicissimus*, would have enhanced her astute study.

On the other hand, *The Smiling Muse* has a plethora of poorly reproduced cartoons and caricatures. Jerold Savory and Patricia Marks have collected a melange of comic Victoriana from several popular North American and English journals including *Life, Puck, Judge, Vanity Fair*, and *Punch*. Sadly, *The Smiling Muse* largely fails to live up to its authors' promise of insight into the nineteenth century imagination or into the contents of Victorian comic periodicals. Savory and Marks' knowledge of the history and art history of the period is too sketchy, as is their command of the aesthetics of caricature and cartoon or the development of journalism. Their enthusiasm is evident. It is not enough when dealing with such a demanding subject.

Peter Mellini
San Francisco State & Sonoma State universities

Library Subscription Form

American Journalism
School of Communication
P.O. Box 1482
University of Alabama
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

Please enter our subscription for _____ years of *American Journalism*.

_____ Within territorial United States. Payment of $15.00 per year is enclosed.

_____ Outside United States by surface mail. Payment of $20.00 per year is enclosed.

_____ Outside United States by air mail. Payment of $25.00 per year is enclosed.

_____ Please bill us.

Address _____

Institution _____

City, State, Zip _____

Country _____

A limited number of back issues (Vol. I, No. 2; Vol. II, No. 1 and 2; and Vol. IV, No. 1) are available and may be ordered by writing *American Journalism* in the School of Communication at the University of Alabama. Please include payment of $4.00 per copy (includes $1.00 postage and handling) for orders from within the United States. Surface mail orders from outside the U. S. A. should include $5.00 per issue; air mail orders from outside the U. S. A. should include $6.00 per issue.

For Volumes I and II, *American Journalism* was published twice yearly. Publication frequency became quarterly with Volume III.

American Journalism Historians Association

President: Joseph P. McKerns, *Southern Illinois*
Vice-President: Thomas Connery, *St. Thomas*
Secretary: Don Avery, *Southern Mississippi*
Editor, *American Journalism*: Wm. David Sloan, *Alabama*

Board of Directors:

John Pauly, *Tulsa*
Maurine Beasley, *Maryland*
Richard Scheidenhelm, *Attorney-at-law*
Charles Marler, *Abilene (Tex.) Christian*
Sharon Bass, *Kansas*
Alf Pratte, *Brigham Young*
Leonard Teel, *Georgia State*
J. Snorgrass, *Florida A & M*
James D. Startt, *Valparaiso*

AMERICAN JOURNALISM
Department of Journalism
School of Communication
P.O. Box 1482
University of Alabama
Tuscaloosa, Al 35487

Non-profit organization
U.S. postage paid
The University of Alabama
Permit No. 16

PER
PN
4700
.A39

AMERICAN JOURNALISM

The publication of the
American Journalism Historians Association

BYU Library S

OCT 2 8 2005

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE ASSOCIATION

VOLUME IV (1987), NUMBER 2

AMERICAN JOURNALISM solicits manuscripts throughout the year. Articles are "blind" judged by three readers chosen from the Editorial Board of *American Journalism* for their expertise in the particular subject matter of the articles. On matters of documentation and style, *American Journalism* follows the *MLA Handbook.* Authors are asked to do the same. Four copies of a manuscript should be mailed to the following address:

Wm. David Sloan
Editor, *American Journalism*
School of Communication
P.O.Box 1482
University of Alabama
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

If the author wishes to have the manuscript returned, he or she should include a self-addressed manila envelope with adequate postage.

Inquiries on all matters should be directed to *American Journalism*'s editorial and business offices in the School of Communication at the University of Alabama.

Copyright 1987, American Journalism Historians Association

AMERICAN JOURNALISM

The publication of the
American Journalism Historians Association

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE ASSOCIATION

VOLUME IV (1987) NUMBER 2

AMERICAN JOURNALISM

EDITOR: Wm. David Sloan, *Alabama*
ASSOCIATE EDITORS: Gary Whitby, *Southern Illinois*,
and James D. Startt, *Valparaiso*
ASSISTANT EDITOR: Kelly Saxton, *Alabama*
BOOK REVIEW EDITOR: Douglas Birkhead, *Utah*
GRAPHICS AND DESIGN EDITOR: Sharon M.W. Bass, *Kansas*

EDITORIAL BOARD

Dave Anderson, *Northern Colorado*; Douglas A. Anderson, *Arizona State*; Edd Applegate, *Middle Tennessee State;* Donald Avery, *Southern Mississippi*; Anantha Babbili, *Texas Christian*; Warren E. Barnard, *Indiana State*; Ralph D. Barney, *Brigham Young;* Maurine Beasley, *Maryland;* John Behrens, *Utica of Syracuse*; Sherilyn C. Bennion, *Humboldt State*; Dave Berkman, *Wisconsin-Milwaukee*; Elaine Prostak Berland, *Missouri-St. Louis*; Margaret A. Blanchard, *North Carolina;* James Bow; John C. Bromley, *Northern Colorado*; James A. Brown, *Alabama;* Pamela A. Brown, *Rider;* Michael Buchholz, *Texas A&M;* Gary Burns, *Missouri;* Douglas S. Campbell, *Lock Haven*; Lucy Shelton Caswell, *Ohio State;* Ed Caudill, *Tennessee;* E. Culpepper Clark, *Georgia State*; Linda Cobb-Reiley, *Denver*; Earl L. Conn, *Ball State;* Ted Conover, *Nevada-Reno*; Anne Cooper, *Ohio*; Alfred Comebise, *Northern Colorado*; Patrick Daley, *Alaska-Fairbanks*; Robert W. Davenport, *Nevada-Las Vegas*; Harold Davis, *Georgia State;* John DeMott, *Memphis State*; Wallace B. Eberhard, *Georgia;* Kathleen Endres, *Bowling Geen;* Ralph Engleman, *Long Island*; R. Ferrell Ervin, *Pepperdine;* Donald Fishman, *Boston College*; Robert S. Fortner, *George Washington*; Donald Godfrey, *Southern Utah State*; Irvin Goldman, *Windsor*; Thelma Gorham, *Florida A&M*; David M. Guerra, *Arkansas-Little Rock*; Dennie Hall, *Central (Okla.) State*; John H. Hanson, *Temple*; Jeff Henderson, *Central Arkansas*; Jake Highton, *Nevada-Reno*; Willaim Huntzicker; Ernest C. Hynds, *Georgia*; Phillip Jeter, *Florida A&M*; Myron K. Jordan, *Washington*; Arthur J. Kaul, *Southern Mississippi*; Samuel V. Kennedy III, *Syracuse*; Lauren Kessler, *Oregon;* Sidney Kobre; Peggy Jean Kreshel, *Georgia;* Frank Krompak, *Toledo*; Philip J. Lane, *California State, Fresno*; Bob Lawrence, *New Mexico;* Deryl R. Leaming, *Marshall*; Richard Lentz, *Arizona State*; Alfred L. Lorenz, *Loyola of the South*; Charles H. Marler, *Abilene (Tex.) Christian*; Claudia Martino, *Wichita State*; Carolyn Marvin, *Pennsylvania*; Zena Beth McGlashan, *North Dakota*; William McKeen, *Florida;* Joseph P. McKerns, *Southern Illinois*; William McReynolds, *Colorado-Boulder*; Peter Mellini, *Sonoma State*; William Ray Mofield, *Murray State*; Roy L. Moore, *Kentucky*; Kenneth B. Muir, *Radford*; Sharon M. Murphy, *Marquette*; Michael Murray, *Missouri-St. Louis*; Jack A. Nelson, *Brigham Young*; Edward A. Nickerson, *Delaware*; Marvin Olasky, *Texas*; John Pauly, *Tulsa*; Darwin Payne, *Southern Methodist*; Robert G. Picard, *Louisiana State*; Stephen Ponder, *Oregon*; Alf Pratte, *Brigham Young*; Barbara Straus Reed, *Rutgers*; Sam G. Riley, *Virginia Tech*; Jan C. Robbins, *Northern Iowa*; P.F. Roberson, *Southern*; Nancy L. Roberts, *Minnesota*; Bruce Roche, *Alabama*; Richard Scheidenhelm; Thomas A. Schwartz, *Ohio State*; Arthur Seeger, *Wisconsin-Milwaukee*; Michael D. Sherer, *Nebraska-Omaha*; Kim Smith, *Bowling Geen State*; Zoe Smith, *Marquette*; J. William Snorgrass, *Florida A&M*; Robert Spellman, *Southern Illinois*; Harlan Stensaas, *Mercer*; Fred R. Stewart, *Northern Arizona*; James E. Swartz, *California State-Fullerton*; Ralph J. Turner, *Marshall*; Pat Washburn, *Ohio*; Reg Westmoreland, *North Texas State*; Phyllis Zagano

AMERICAN JOURNALISM (ISSN 0882-1127) Editorial and Business Offices: School of Communication, P.O. Box 1482, Unviersity of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

AMERICAN JOURNALISM

Volume IV (1987) Number 2

Convention Papers Issue

59
The Resurrection of the Prophet:
Martin Luther King, Jr., and the News Weeklies
By Richard Lentz

82
The Party Press and Freedom of the Press, 1798 - 1808
By Wm. David Sloan

97
Producers of the "Popular Engine":
New England's Revolutionary Newspaper Printers
By Carol Sue Humphrey

FROM THE EDITOR

This issue of *American Journalism* contains the historical works selected as the three "Best Papers" in the 1986 American Journalism Historians Association paper competition. Each furnishes a new perspective on journalism history.

Carol Sue Humphrey provides a picture of the American printing profession during the Revolutionary War era. Wm. David Sloan demonstrates that Americans' views on freedom of the press in the early 1800s had not become libertarian, as other historians have argued. Richard Lentz traces Dr. Martin Luther King's image as a leader in the mainstream of traditional American values as a product of, in part, American news magazines.

The authors presented the studies in their original form at last year's AJHA convention in St. Louis, Missouri. The AJHA sponsors publication of *American Journalism.*

After referees had selected the papers through blind judging, a special board of editors for *American Journalism* examined them. Authors' used the editors' comments and suggestions, along with those of the original paper judges, in writing revised, final versions for publication.

Papers in this year's competition will be presented at the 1987 convention (September 10 through October 4) at College of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota. The papers selected as the best will be published in *American Journalism* in 1988.

Some readers may notice a typographic difference in this issue of *American Journalism.* It is due to a change from phototypesetting to "desktop publishing" using a laser printer. We hope the change will contribute to improved visual quality, shorter production times, and more typographic versatility.

The Resurrection of the Prophet: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the News Weeklies

By Richard Lentz

In the last three years of his life, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the prophet who rose in the South to lead the struggle against Jim Crow, moved from reform to radicalism. Following his successful 1965 voting rights campaign in Selma, King sought out a wider stage for his activism. Initially, he attempted to become a prophet of peace, speaking out in 1965 for a negotiated settlement of the Vietnam war. Stunned by the adverse reaction, from many blacks as well as whites, King retreated from the war issue for almost two years. In 1966, King led the Chicago Freedom Movement, his only major civil rights campaign outside the South, which took as its major issue segregated housing patterns. During the campaign white mobs attacked demonstrators marching through ethnic neighborhoods, and the venture ended as a disastrous failure for King.

King's most intense radicalism began in 1967. He returned to the war issue with a vengeance, likening the American war in Vietnam to the Nazi genocide. Finally, in 1967 and 1968, King set in motion his most radical and ambitious social project, a class-structured movement of the poor that would begin in Washington in the spring of 1968 and push Gandhian nonviolence to its limits in order to force the national government to relieve the misery of the impoverished. No longer was King content to be a black leader. Instead, he began to gather under his banner representatives of America's poor. Black, white, red, and brown, they would travel to Washington, in numbers eventually swelling to 3,000 and they would, as King put it, nonviolently "attack the evils of modern corporate society." Before King could lead his Poor People's Campaign, however, he was murdered in Memphis by a sniper.[1]

King thus had precipitated a crisis of symbols in American society. This article examines the reconciliation of that crisis by the three major American news magazines. The analysis is limited to the coverage of King by *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News & World Report* in the first three weeks after his death, perhaps the most critical period for the creation of the benign, reformist image of King which is most evident in the celebration of his birthdate as a national holiday.

The truth of King was not self-evident. It demanded that the news weeklies smooth away an awkward connotation here, silence an embarrassing outcry there. Their interpretation was not seamless, but it was as much so as the magazines

---

RICHARD LENTZ (Ph. D., Iowa) is an associate professor at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Telecommunication at Arizona State University.

could make it in the struggle to reconcile the crisis of symbols. In the end, radicalism interred with him, King's spirit, like John Brown's, was free to march on, affirming the best of America, its principles of equality and justice.

In order to resurrect King symbolically, the news magazines had to demonstrate what King was *not* as well as what he was. They accomplished this primarily through three major themes. In the first theme, King appeared as a heroic moderate opposed to extremists; in the second, the Southern theme, King was essentially limited to his role as a prophet from the South, the man who had destroyed Jim Crow; finally, the theme of national symbolism portrayed King as at one with all Americans -- other than Southern segregationists and black radicals and extremists.

The Theme of Moderation

The theme of moderation required the magazines to dispose of several problems. In some ways the most critical was posed by King's genius as a speaker. Any summary of his public life would seem unacceptably incomplete if it lacked excerpts from his speeches. Some orations, especially the address at the 1963 March on Washington, presented no problem because they were ringing endorsements of America's good will and high ideals. Not so the speeches made after King took up the Vietnam war as a cause and started organizing the Poor People's Movement.

Editorial silence greeted these later speeches. Particularly striking was *Newsweek*'s account, in which it appeared King had been struck dumb between the Selma march in 1965 and March 31, 1968,[2] the period of his growing radicalism. The gap of approximately three years argues against the idea that *Newsweek* was merely hitting the oratorical high points. In fact, references by King to the war, class and class interests, and urban problems were conspicuous by their absence.

Time arranged excerpts from King's addresses thematically rather than chronologically, and published one from the period of King's radicalism. It set forth a position that *Time* once described as "the most reasonable application" of Black Power. The gist was that the black man could not separate himself from American society, a sentiment with which *Time* fully agreed. Less acceptable was the Poor People's Campaign, passed over by *Time* which substituted an innocuous quotation that it did little " 'good to be able to sit at a lunch counter if you can't buy a hamburger.' "[3]

And King's indictment of America's war ("We have supported the enemies of the peasants of Saigon. We have corrupted their women and children and killed their men. What liberators!") yielded to a paean to peace with which few could quarrel: " 'Sooner or later all the people of the world will have to discover a way to live together in peace, and thereby transform this pending cosmic elegy into a creative psalm of brotherhood.' "[4]

U.S. News incorporated a few excerpts into stories that transformed King astoundingly. No longer was he the familiar devil figure who consorted with

astoundingly. No longer was he the familiar devil figure who consorted with Communists, the false prophet of civil disobedience, or the relentless black leader preparing to lay siege to the national government. Instead, King preached "not revolution but brotherhood," and it appeared he had never espoused any other gospel.[5] *U.S. News* also cast a new light on the March on Washington. In 1963, the magazine had rebuked King for militancy that "momentarily stirred" the crowd, and did not allow the sacred phrases of the Declaration of Independence to pass King's lips. Five years later, however, King was permitted to mingle his words with Jefferson's: " '. . . I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal. . . ." ' "[6]

Had there been nothing more, the silence of *Newsweek* and *Time* and the reinterpretation by *U.S. News* would have demonstrated remarkable unanimity about King's life and usefulness as a symbol. But there was other evidence, this arising from the allegations of *Time* and *U.S. News* before King's death that he had scurried away like a coward from a march in Memphis after trouble started. The episode now was ignored. Instead, *Time* reported this: "King had assured his colleagues that, despite death threats, he was not afraid. 'Maybe I've got the advantage over most people,' he mused. 'I've conquered the fear of death.' " But he was not innocent about the risks: "King was . . . well aware of his vulnerability." Similarly, *U.S. News* selected these telling details: "Dr. King had no choice but to live dangerously. He had been struck, kicked, spat upon, and shot at. His home had been bombed, his life threatened repeatedly." No such defense of King's courage was necessary for *Newsweek*, which had not questioned it, but even *Newsweek* acted to erase any doubts.[7]

King was no coward, but the point is not his courage but the way the news weeklies emphasized it. In part, their motivation doubtless was the drama of a man who foresaw his own death in his final speech in Memphis. No matter that King had predicted his death before and had been wrong; he was correct this time. But there was more. King became a symbol fit for the American pantheon in the process of removing, without referring to them, any questions lingering as a result of his hasty departure from the demonstration in Memphis. Such statements served another purpose as well. Nonviolent courage hardly fitted the American ideal of the hero; a man who prophesized his own death and yet persisted in his course clarified matters considerably.

King had demonstrated courage in a less acceptable way. His outspokenness about the war *Newsweek* and *Time* dismissed crisply. In *Newsweek*'s assessment, King's "digression" into the anti-war movement "irritated the [black] movement's moderate elders." (*Newsweek* had been no less irked.) *Time* passed over the force of King's moral fervor with the statement that "he inveighed against the Vietnam war, saying it hamstrung the civil rights drive and the war on poverty." *U.S. News* ignored King's role in the peace movement.[8]

By dismissing King as a critic of the war, the magazines perpetuated his value

as a symbol. In order to do this, however, they were forced to break sharply with journalistic practice, which holds prominence to be one of the most important criteria of news value. King was probably the war's most prominent critic.[9] Because of the obvious association of time and theme (memories of the critical Tet offensive in Vietnam, which began in late January, were still vivid), journalists normally would have developed fully his critical role in the anti-war movement. Silence from one magazine and a sentence in two others fell far short of the standard.

Why so little attention was paid to his opposition to the war probably comes down to respectability. Not that it was particularly disreputable now to criticize the war; Tet had applied a gloss of respectability to the anti-war movement. But the matter cried out for careful handling. King's words had been most intemperate. Americans might be dubious about their government and its promises; whether they were willing to accept his comparison of America's soldiers and Hitler's *Schutzstaffel* -- "we test out our latest weapons" on the Vietnamese, King had cried, "just as the Germans tested out new medicine and new tortures in the concentration camps of Europe" -- was something entirely different. Furthermore, King had shared the anti-war cause with black militants, an embarrassment when the magazines were attempting to put as much distance as possible between King and the leading Black Power militant, Stokely Carmichael of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

Employing King and Carmichael as symbols was anything but a novel tactic. Off and on since 1966, the magazines had juxtaposed them, generally with King as a symbol opposed to Carmichael. When King became a prophet of peace in 1967, however, the two were joined, to use *Time*'s phrase, in the radical firm of "King, Carmichael & Co." With King dead, the magazines were striving for a simple equation -- on one hand violence and radicalism, in a word, Carmichael, on the other, nonviolence and moderation, King.

Curiously, the contraposing of King and Carmichael was strongest in *U.S. News*, which previously had exerted itself to establish their consanguinity. King's marches "sometimes ended in trouble," it reported, but he nevertheless "had exercised a restraining influence with his preaching of 'nonviolence.' Now, with Dr. King gone, the Negro masses are seen as open to incitement by more radical leaders," especially Carmichael, who "called on Negroes to 'get guns' and retaliate for Dr. King's murder." The article concluded with a sociologist's dire analysis that Carmichael had become "the man of the hour among Negroes, and I see no way for the country to avoid being plunged into racial war.' "[10]

A week later, Carmichael was depicted raising his fist in the Black Power salute and declaring on Radio Havana that " 'it is crystal-clear to us the United States of America must fall in order for humanity to live.' " *U.S. News* reiterated in the following issue its claim that Carmichael was linked to the Communist bloc. By contrast, the same article described King as a moderate and employed him as a contrasting symbol to Carmichael and other "Negro extremists."[11]

To *Time* and *Newsweek*, it appeared that a fierce struggle was underway to

seize control of King as a symbol. The militants, they maintained, had scorned King as worn-out and useless before his death, but now wished to exalt him as their own symbol.[12] In the process of resurrecting King as a symbol in their own image, *Time* and *Newsweek* found Carmichael very nearly as useful as King himself.

Newsweek, for example, portrayed the "Black Power-monger Stokely Carmichael" spouting incendiery rhetoric and dishonoring the memory of a prophet of nonviolence by showing up at a memorial service waving a gun. *Newsweek*'s King was sketched by the mayor of New York City who urged " 'the young men of this city to respect our laws and the teachings of the martyr.' " The message was repeated the following week. Carmichael "confidently proclaimed: 'A lot of people who were afraid to pick up guns will now pick up guns . . . . America must be burned down in order for us to survive.' "[13]

Time deployed its symbols similarly. As had *Newsweek*, *Time* attached a label to Carmichael: "Black Powermonger." As had *U.S. News*, *Time* denounced him as a tool of the Communists who was initially undecided about how he should respond to King's death until he received a call from the Cuban press agency, Prensa Latina in New York, after which he appeared on Washington streets waving a pistol and urging blacks to arm.[14] The point was reiterated in an article in which *Time* observed: "In the short run, the murder in Memphis will probably increase the power of the militants."[15]

The funeral provided other opportunities to develop the two symbols. Carmichael was portrayed as a discordant and unwelcomed interloper on what *U.S. News* described as a "day of perfect order" in Atlanta. Carmichael not only made an inappropriate gesture -- the clenched-fist Black Power salute -- but even arrived with a "personal bodyguard" in tow. *Newsweek* added the implication that Carmichael was a gate-crasher; he and "a half-dozen SNCC janizaries argued their way inside." Most compelling of all were the details supplied by *Time*. Carmichael lacked the proper sense of dress -- he wore a "dark suit, dark blue Mao shirt, shades and zippered suede diddybop boots" -- and had no sense of occasion; he "darted down to Coretta King and began a whispered conversation. Mrs. King listened for several minutes, and, after sipping briefly from a Coca-Cola glass of iced water, dismissed him.' "[16]

Such tiny details added up to a sum greater than its parts. As demonstrated by decorum and dress, Carmichael was an intruder; that was one point. He had been properly dismissed, with no untoward scene to mar a day that demanded dignity; that was another. Finally, if Carmichael had no rightful place at the funeral, he could not lay claim to King either as a symbol or fellow radical. The news weeklies used the facts at their disposal judiciously, eliminating dissonance that might detract from the symbolic clarity. However true that King was wedded to nonviolence and Carmichael to the opposite, King was a pragmatist who unblinkingly reached an agreement with Carmichael whereby the latter pledged not to interfere with the Poor People's Campaign.

That campaign presented another problem. The disruption would be so mas-

sive, so went King's thinking, that it would force the government to relieve the misery of the poor, and eventually would lead to a radical transformation of American society. Only the element of disruption was developed to any extent. *Time* outlined it most clearly:

> He threatened national boycotts and spoke of disrupting entire cities by nonviolent but obstructive camp-ins. His newly emphasized goals: "Economic security; decent, sanitary housing; a quality education." . . . Late last year he added: "We have learned from bitter experience that our government does not move to correct a problem involving race until it is confronted directly and dramatically." At the end, he was organizing the massive march of the poor on Washington -- and if Congress proved recalcitrant, he threatened to obstruct the national political conventions.[17]

Certainly the statement painted King as something of a radical, but it did not stand alone. Previously, King was introduced as a leader "dangerously close to slipping from prophet to patsy" of the black militants. In effect, then, King was being manipulated as the extremists had done before.[18]

Time's King was someone else, the bridge between "black despair and white concern," the leader whose "luminous words" pricked the conscience of white America: " 'We will match your capacity to inflict suffering with our capacity to endure suffering. . . . And in winning our freedom, we will so appeal to your heart and conscience that we will win you in the process.' " Thus *Time* diluted King's radicalism by offering a message that was couched "in the language of the prophets and the revivalists [and] never directly threatened, probably never really disconcerted."[19]

The radicalism of the campaign was diluted almost to the point of invisibility. Save for veiled references, there was no indication that it was class-structured. Nor did *Time* consider it advisable to refer to King's encounter as a theology student with Marxist studies.[20]

Newsweek did report that King had studied Marx. King remained untainted by the association, however, because he merely "dabbled in the literature of social conscience and social change: Thoreau, Gandhi, Marx, Hegel." And *Newsweek* made no connection between Marxist notions and the Poor People's Campaign aside from a passing reference to the coming participation of both blacks and whites in a "squat-in." Basically, the campaign was to be simply an extension of King's legitimate "ministry to the poor."[21]

Newsweek was less explicit than *Time* in describing the disruption and obstruction that King had expected to be necessary in Washington. Instead, it evoked the tactics of the old civil rights campaigns:

> The guiding principle was nonviolence, a holy order for King,

> a mere tactic for some of his disciples. But those black militants who understood nonviolence to mean submissiveness -- and those whites who thought it promised comfort -- both missed the point. King and his men were conscious provocateurs, stretching a community's racist nerves up to and sometimes past the breaking point. "Nonviolent direct action," King wrote in a celebrated letter from a Birmingham jail cell, "seeks to create such a crisis and . . . tension that a community . . . is forced to confront the issue."[22]

In fact, King planned to do this much and more in Washington. Indeed King had expected to mount a nonviolent campaign, as *Newsweek* said; as it did not say, he also intended to raise hell nonviolently with the federal government.

The point did not escape *U.S. News*, which had its headquarters in the target city. Even with its new-found appreciation of King's value as a symbol, the Poor People's Campaign remained a threat that, if its demands were not met, would "escalate until 'hundreds of thousands' would be beseiging the capital by mid-June." In the same issue emerged one of the last notes in the magazine's four-year campaign against King, a shopworn denunciation of "clergymen, who, while preaching nonviolence, have closed their eyes to the incitement to violence which results from street 'demonstrations' and, in some cases, from defiance of the law itself." It was probably an accident rather than a last assault on King's reputation; in fact, *U.S. News* now feared that King would be replaced by "firebands [who] will repudiate and destroy" his legacy of nonviolence.[23] The symbolic King was coming into sharper focus as the magazines demonstrated what King was not. King was no coward, thus a fit symbol. He was at most mildly critical of his country's war, certainly not the sort of critic to mention in the same breath America and Hitler's Third Reich. He was placed symbolically in opposition to Carmichael, who had so little in common with King that he did not even deserve a pew at the funeral. There were, of course, references to the disruption King was preparing, but these were innundated by the symbolism of King, or removed from a contemporary context and resituated in the old Southern movement.

The Southern Theme

The Southern theme included a number of different strains -- racism and the civil rights movement, King as exemplar of the black clergy who led the movement, and the significance of King's murder in a Southern city. There was an additional matter critical to the theme: King's venture outside his native region in 1966 as the leader of the Chicago Freedom Movement. His inadequacies as a leader once outside the South had to be established, and some explanation of why he failed would have to be offered; the later failure could not be so great, however, as to overshadow his earlier triumphs. The latter problem was handled easily enough. References to King's Chicago campaign were few and brief. The editorial tack of *U.S. News* was most striking. For much of the Southern movement, *U.S. News* had grumbled about Northern hypocrisy in matters racial and warned

that the North's time was coming. Nevertheless, its biographical sketch accounted for the failure of "the northward surge of Dr. King's movement into Chicago" with the explanation that times were changing, that "militant Negroes challenged Dr. King [and] extremists ridiculed Dr. King's nonviolence."[24]

Time and *Newsweek* agreed. King failed outside the South essentially because he had been bypassed by the forces he had helped set in motion. *Time*'s didactic point appeared in an incident from the 1965 Watts rioting; "a young looter, asked if he thought Dr. King would approve, retorted: 'Martin Luther Who?' "[25] The theme was extended the following week:

> His real influence was largely limited to the South, where the Negro pastor had traditionally had a strong hold on his flock . . . and where King could point to concrete victories as legal segregation was abolished. In the North, where racial attitudes are subtler and the Negroes' plight is largely one of economic deprivation, he never achieved comparable success.[26]

Newsweek offered the most complete account of his career. King, by measure of pragmatic gains, lost more often than he won. His major disasters seemed to come, however, when he ventured out of the South:

> But events tumbled past King; he seemed somehow to lose the pulse of history. The locus of the movement shifted from the South to the North, and King's style did not travel well. The focus changed, too, from issues of dignity to subtler questions of poverty and caste -- the sort that cannot be dealth with by protest alone . . . His first Northern venture in Chicago fizzled.[27]

Assertions that King lost the pulse of history or was frustrated by militants glossed over much else. The burden of failure in Chicago indeed rests upon King. Yet some embarrassment was averted by passing over another matter. King and Chicago establishment had signed an agreement covering open housing and other issues, and the latter had broken it as soon as was convenient. A bargain cynically made and as cynically broken was no shining example of American idealism at work. By omitting the fate of that agreement, so obvious as to require an effort just to ignore it, the sense was preserved that reformism was the most productive way to social change.

Nor did *Time* or *Newsweek* report that King had learned from his mistakes in Chicago. As both pointed out, King absorbed the costly lessons of his Albany disaster and went on to triumph in Birmingham in 1963. King had intended to apply what he had learned at equal cost in Chicago, one lesson being apparently that a coalition of the poor was necessary.[28] The Chicago debacle contributed to King's plans in 1968 in another way. King came to realize that he had been had

in Chicago and could expect little better elsewhere. The grimness of his thinking emerges from a lecture delivered in 1967. "We must formulate a program and we must fashion the new tactics which do not count on government good will, but instead serve to compel unwilling authorities to yield to the mandates of justice," King said. "We in SCLC must work out programs to bring the social change movements through from their early and now inadequate protest phase to the stage of massive, active, nonviolent resistance to the evils of the modern society."[29] King clearly had traveled far ideologically from the struggle with Jim Crow.

The Southern theme dominated *Time*'s and *Newsweek*'s reports of the death and funeral of King. There is a rub. Considered as journalism, much of the reportage was neither contrived nor unexpected. King was murdered in a Southern city, his funeral was that of a black Southern Baptist, and his campaigns before 1966 had been confined to the South. Even those factors do not altogether account, however, for the persistence and power of the theme.

The theme was developed through emphasis, omission, and statements. *Newsweek*'s analysis was that

> King was first a Southerner and a preacher, and his great contributions were uniquely Southern and Christian . . . . He was a figure of what his old friend Bayard Rustin calls the "dignity period" of the movement -- the days when the bull's-eye issue was Southern Jim Crow and the civil rights leadership was knitted in ecumenical unity.[30]

Similar in tone was *Time*'s examination of King as a black Southern minister and activist:

> The pastor -- as the only Negro not dependent on the white man for his pay -- also became the natural community leader . . . . By comparison with King and other outspoken Southern pastors, the majority of Northern clergy have been much more passive in the struggle for equality -- and have allowed the movement to fall into militant secular hands.[31]

Throughout his career, King was contraposed against other symbolic figures, black and white, conservative and militant. The process continued after his death. *Time*, for example, contraposed King to Bull Connor of Birmingham infamy, "the white villain" waiting to attack "King's black heroes as they marched -- clad in their Sunday clothes -- to meet his truncheons, hoses, and dogs." *Newsweek* invoked as well another old foe, Sheriff Jim Clark of Selma and his "billy-swinging posses." Such statements -- not reproduced in *U.S. News* -- fixed King symbolically as a reformer.

Superimposed on images of King were other images that *Time* and *Newsweek*

presented with something akin to nostalgia. *Newsweek's* flight of fancy about the ecumenical unity of the old movement -- which had as many factions as any other social movement -- was but one example.[33] Matters were simpler then -- or so it seemed a half-decade later. King's clarion call for justice had pricked the conscience of the nation, and the nation had responded. Small wonder that the half-wistful tone of *Time* or the recollection of *Newsweek* issued almost as a keening, not for King only but for those "romantic days" when much seemed possible, even that the "dream of a beloved society might one day come true."[34]

In truth, powerful symbols of national unity and greatness were hard to come by in 1968. American military power seemed ineffectual against a primitive enemy in Vietnam. Black militants were scorning Lincoln, the Great Emancipator, as just another honky. Lyndon Johnson, who as an American president symbolized the virtues and greatness of the Republic, had been emasculated politically. Middle-class values -- of which the news weeklies were vigorously protective -- were derided by many young Americans. Such was the paucity of useful symbols that *Newsweek* and *Time* scrutinized the rioting touched off by the assassination of King for any sign that the breach between black and white would be bridged, that, as *Newsweek* put it, Americans would realize King's life and death "argued that it was time at long last to come home."[35] Thus was King a symbol extracted from an age when national unity seemed in retrospect a given, when the moral greatness of America was reaffirmed in the process of bringing justice to the black Southerner. In such a year as 1968, a symbol of this magnitude was not to be discarded by magazines that had to make sense of a world doubtless regarded as mad by many readers.

Another strain of the Southern theme was provided by Memphis, which, along with its mayor and the garbage strike by the predominantly black union, was symbolically recreated by *Time*'s and *Newsweek's* reports as a contemporary parallelism of the civil rights movement. The process was begun immediately by *Time*, which mingled Faulknerian images of "a Southern backwater" and a minor labor dispute involving thirteen hundred black garbage collectors that "first attracted and finally eradicated Dr. King, the conquerer of Montgomery, Birmingham, and Selma."[36]

Newsweek set Memphis apart from almost any other American city, where "it would have been hard to imagine a similar labor dispute -- a major municipality taking a stand against recognizing an established municipal union. But it was precisely this issue that . . . ultimately set the stage" for the assassination. Memphis was set apart in another way. Throughout the nation, the "common reaction was shock and grief" when the assassination was reported. Not, however, in Memphis where was "hung out a sign that said, 'Martin Luther Coon is dead.' "[37]

Such images would have been incomplete had they lacked a personification of the evil against which King had struggled. Mayor Henry Loeb served that purpose.

Time limited itself initially to the entirely accurate analysis that the refusal of

the intransigent Loeb to meet the demands of the strikers produced the crisis. Later, however, it transformed Loeb into a "wealthy Southern patrician-turned-politician,"[38] a phrase that evoked the planter-aristocracy (of which Loeb was not a member; his family made its money, mundanely, in the laundry business), and fixed Loeb as a symbol against the black Everyman of Memphis, represented collectively by the black unionmen.

The symbolism attached to Loeb by *Newsweek* was similar. He was depicted as a hypocrite, if not a coward, who "called on all his 700,000 townspeople to be without fear," but "hid a sawed-off shotgun under his desk." *Newsweek* also attributed the "Mess in Memphis" to Loeb's "segregationist politics [derived] from the traditional white paternalism that still permeates Memphis at every level." After the strike was settled, *Newsweek* became less acerbic about Loeb, but the strike remained the cause of King's death. "The price of victory," *Newsweek* mourned, would "not easily be forgotten. 'We won,' said one old garbage man, 'but we lost a good man along the way.' "[39]

Other discordant elements were omitted lest they detract from the symbolic whole. An example was the Jim Crow label attached to Memphis. Memphis had more than its share of racism, but it represented other complex and contradictory factors that *Time*, to take the most striking example, stripped from its post-assassination articles because they would not fit so readily into the Southern theme. Whatever its failings in dealing justly with the black man, by 1968 Memphis resembled other American cities more than the Birmingham of 1963 or the Selma of 1965. Pat Watters, a researcher for the biracial Southern Regional Council, provided the pointed observation that Memphis "symbolized more than the South. Its racial crisis of 1968, and its murderous failure were those of all America."[40]

Loeb was another case in point. Neither *Time* nor *Newsweek* overstated his responsibility for the evolution of the garbage strike into a racial crisis. At the same time, the Loeb created by the two magazines as a "Southern patrician-turned-politican" who took "segregationist politics from the traditional white paternalism of Memphis" was as much symbolic as actual. Paternalistic, stubborn, exquisitely sensitive to white public opinion and to losing face -- all that was Loeb, who had conducted a racially polarized mayoral race in 1967. On the other hand, maintaining segregationist politics in Memphis, a city with an old and dynamic tradition of black political power, was not something Loeb could expect to carry off -- as he tacitly acknowledged by appointing a black man as one of his cabinet officers. That sort of public act would be unimaginable for a Bull Connor. However short Loeb fell of Connor's standard of malignant racism, he was the only symbol of white racism available to *Time* and *Newsweek*, and they made do with what they had.[41]

Equally striking was the way *Time* and *Newsweek* presented the garbage strike as a revolt by oppressed blacks against oppressive whites. Other information went unrecorded, most notably the national union's role in the strike. *Time* assigned the leadership role to T.O. Jones, the president of the striking local. Jones

did indeed lead Local 1733 into the strike, but a day or two after it started, the parent union, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, took control of the strike. In selecting Jones as a symbol, *Time* had chosen a cipher.[42]

After the strike became a racial issue, it was controlled by the black clergy of Memphis, organized as the Community on the March to Equality. An effective working coalititon of COME and the national union was forged. The coalition went unremarked by *Newsweek*, which since 1966 had grasped eagerly at every sign that the old civil rights coalition might be revitalized. In Memphis, where such a coalition was so visible it could not escape notice, *Newsweek* did not record its existence.

By annointing Jones as the leader of the strike and passing over the important role of the parent union, *Time* and *Newsweek* respectively clarified the symbolism, oppressed blacks rising up against white oppressors, and enhanced the role of King. The presence of the national union would have detracted from the Southern theme and lessened King's symbolism; King would have been shown in an alliance with a large, powerful, and aggressive national union as well as the leader of the humble garbage collectors.

In contrast to *Time* and *Newsweek*, *U.S. News* attached little significance to the strike or the city in which King was murdered. Its initial report noted merely that "Dr. King had returned to Memphis to prepare for another march in support of a strike by city garbage collectors, most of whom are Negroes."[43] Nor did it regard the strike as the proximate cause of his death.[44] Naturally, the conservative *U.S. News*, which had a lengthy history of sympathy for Southern resistance to desegregation, could be expected to dismiss any such connections.

There was another reason as well. The Southern theme would have undercut the pet theory of *U.S. News* that a conspiracy was afoot. Editor David Lawrence advanced the theory in late April. Was the assassination of King plotted by one man? "Or was he hired and directed by some organization? We know that a few Communists have been covertly involving themselves in the civil rights movement." Lawrence had someone in mind: Stokely Carmichael, not cited by name but identified contextually as one of the "militant" travelers to Communist countries, who returning to America, urged the populace "to rise, to burn property, to obtain guns, to defy the agencies of government."[45] Interestingly, not too dissimilar statements were used to attack King and his Poor People's Campaign a month or so earlier. But King was dead now, and *U.S. News* was doing its part to resurrect the martyr.

The theory of a Communist conspiracy held no appeal for *Time* and *Newsweek*. Their motive of choice, meshing smoothly with the Southern theme, was racism. *Time* reported, for example, that "amateur assassinologists" believed that "King's death had been engineered by a group of white Southern racists." Further strengthening the implication was a description of the then fugitive James Earl

Ray as a follower of George Wallace and as one who "loved hillbilly music and spoke in Southern-accented ungrammatical speech."[46]

It was logical to throw a net in the midst of the segregationists. Many were violent men, some no doubt capable of murder, and the plots against King's life during the old Southern movement made the motive worth pursuing. But the net was too small. The movement of King toward radicalism almost certainly broadened the list of his enemies beyond unreconstructed segregationists. And there was another matter, suggested by *Newsweek*'s disposition of another theory of King' murder, the "under investigation by G-men in California"; method and motive were described with delicate vagueness as a "hired-gun killing arranged by a Negro with a personal animus against King"; in fact, FBI agents were investigating the possibility that King was slain at the instigation of a cuckold. Whether aware or not of the cause of the animus, *Newsweek* cast doubt on the theory as "farther-out."[47]

The Southern theme was most intense in the reports of the funeral. Predictably, the theme was weakest in *U.S. News*, although there were traces of it even in the magazine that had been most hostile to King. Perhaps most striking was the closing of the story that used (as did *Time* and *Newsweek*) the final phrase from King's "I Have a Dream" speech in 1963: "Dr. King's marble crypt bore the words of an old slave song: 'Free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty, I'm free at last.' "[48]

Time intensified the Southern theme by associating the black church, King, and the civil rights movement. His activism was recalled even in the description of the garb of Ralph David Abernathy, King's successor, who wore beneath his ministerial robes "scuffed, thong-laced 'marching boots,' " and the point was buttressed by labeling the procession from church to cemetery as "King's Last March."[49]

The theme was strongest by far in *Newsweek*. One article offered King's widow as an exemplar of a black wife and mother whose serenity was honed by adversity and the insults and injuries visited upon the black Southerner. She continued to share her husband's burdens; a day before her husband was buried, "she kept one more engagement he couldn't fill, leading a protest march for the garbage collectors whose long, bitter strike had brought King to his fateful rendezvous in Memphis."[50]

Not acknowledged by *Newsweek* were other burdens Mrs. King had shared in the past and would shoulder in the future. Perhaps the most telling service in her husband's cause occurred when she and their children lived with King for a time in a slum apartment in Chicago. That episode was publicized in 1966, but *Newsweek* now was rushing past this phase of King's career. Nor was Mrs. King permitted to take up another banner from her fallen husband, his struggle against the war. *Newsweek* found space, however, to record the fact that she substituted for her late husband as the commencement speaker at Harvard.[51]

For *Newsweek*, as for *Time*, the funeral was "for those who were there, . . . one last chance to march with Martin." *Newsweek* usually suffered in compari-

sons with the more polished *Time*, but on this occasion *Newsweek* outdid *Time* in the sheer power of prose. From the rituals of the day, *Newsweek* extracted moving images:

> First came the old people, who . . . stood and waited and filed past the casket in the dim light of an electric cross, and they were the beginnings of a crowd that filled the streets and porches and the rooftops when a sultry morning broke through the freshly blossoming dogwoods. These were the ordinary people, men in floppy, double-breasted Sunday suits, women in tweeds impossibly heavy for the heat of the day, and an old lady grieved: "We lost somebody, didn't we? I'm hoping Easter Sunday he'll rise again!"[52]

Services complete, the crowds outside the church parted to make way, and the casket was placed in a wagon drawn by two mules for "King's last parade":

> And then the marchers. They were funerally silent at first, and so, as they passed the rows of spectators lining the sidewalk, there was only the low rumble of footsteps, the slow clip-clop and an occasional outcry: "Oh Lord . . . Oh King Jesus, King Jesus." But then, as they flowed into the shuttered streets of downtown Atlanta, the old songs welled up -- and mostly, in measured cadence, "We Shall Overcome."
>
> All that was left was the ride to the slope in South View Cemetery, founded a century ago by black men grown tired of burying their dead through the back gate at the municipal graveyard. . . ."[53]

With such scenes were mingled vestigial images of Jim Crow, represented by Georgia's Governor Lester Maddox, he of the axe handles and the racist mutterings. The mourners marched under the gaze of the "segregationist . . . Maddox [who] cowered under heavy state police guard against the expected onset of Armageddon. 'If they start coming in here,' Maddox solemnly told his troopers, 'we're gonna stack them up.' They didn't; they marched past singing 'The Battle Hymn of the Republic' while the cordon of hard-hatted troopers stared balefully out at them. . . ."[54]

The Theme of National Symbolism

The theme of national symbolism emerged most strongly from the reports of King's funeral, an affair of state in all but name. The nation was represented symbolically by President Johnson, calling for peace in the streets as a memorial to King. He also spoke on behalf of the nation to the widow in an exchange reported by *Newsweek*. She responded: "I'm glad I live in a country where the

president takes time to make a call like this. Thank you, Mr. President.' "[55]

The magazines maintained a discreet silence, however, about the absence of the president. Johnson had ordered the flags flown at half-staff and proclaimed a day of national mourning, but he could not bring himself to attend the funeral of a man "who had done so much to turn opinion against the war in Vietnam and thus bring down his presidency."[56] *Time* and *U.S. News* merely noted that Vice President Humphrey was sent as the president's special representative; *Newsweek* did no more than record Humphrey's presence. Passing over Johnson's absence the magazines were free to pass over as well the virtual banishment of King from the White House after his outcry against the war in 1967. Harmony was thus preserved, as was the symbolism of King.

Also contributing to the theme was the notion of a nation at one in its grief. Television was the instrument whereby Americans were brought together. The magazines referred to the millions of viewers who watched the services, but the size of the audience was less important than the sense of vicarious community. Across the nation *Time* found usually busy streets "echoed eerily and emptily under sunny skies; banks and department stores, their windows unlit, were closed all or most of the day; schools in many cities were shuttered in tribute." *Newsweek* added similar details about the postponements of rituals of American life such as the opening of the baseball season, explaining that "in the shock of the assassination and its aftermath, there seemed little doubt that Americans wanted to do something."[57]

A community of shared grief necessitated the leveling of barriers of race and class. Each journal observed that the funeral occasioned grief among blacks and whites. The obsequies were described as democratic, *Time* recounting the "humbling experience for some of the sixty U.S. Congressmen who attended the funeral and found themselves forced to wait outside" while *U.S. News* reported that "mourners [were] of every degree and station, laborers mingling with governors, and welfare mothers with millionaires." *Newsweek* combined both points, writing of the "stunning impact, for plain Negroes, of seeing whites of power mourn a protestant black."[58]

Not all Americans mourned King. To report this would have been nonsensical -- and not as useful to make manifest King's status as a national symbol. Among these deviants were the Southerners who had fought King so long and violently. *Newsweek* reported, for example, that "George Wallace managed the word 'regrettable' when informed of the death of King." On the other hand, Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago, who had fought King as vigorously and with far more cunning and success than Wallace, "pleaded for peace on TV after King's murder," though his words "fell on deaf ears."[59]

Black radicals served much the same purpose as white segregationists. The news weeklies erected King as a symbol in opposition to the rioting and looting touched off by his death. *Newsweek* put it most directly. Even as King "made his last journey, the black pall of arson and the crack of snipers' rifles dishonored his memory in cities across America."[60]

Time and *U.S. News* employed variations on the approach. The mobs and looters were exploiting King's memory. *Time* summed it up in a headline, "Avenging What's-His-Name," and lead paragraph that proclaimed: "The majority of plunderers and burners in American cities last week was about as ideologically motivated as soldier ants." Sputtering with rage, *U.S. News* denounced the "Negro mobs [that] terrorized the nation's capital, burning, looting, beating whites, attacking police and firemen, and threatening wholesale slaughter." And this, of course, was almost precisely what *U.S. News* had predicted would occur because of the insatiable blacks. Still, not *everything* was precisely as foreseen. *U.S. News* had warned continually since 1964 that King's pernicious doctrine of civil disobedience would lead to anarchy. Now, however, King was a moderate, a contrasting symbol to radicals, thugs, and looters.

Juxtaposed with the scenes played out by rioters and Southern racists were other scenes that had the effect of making King one with the nation. His death had so stirred well-to-do Americans that *Time* felt compelled to list the gestures demonstrating a "profound effect" on the white conscience:

> Some girls from . . . a private college outside riot-torn Baltimore, loaded cars . . . with cartons of food and relayed them to the city's burned-out core, racing against a four p.m. curfew. Many matrons in Washington and its suburbs contributed food, clothing, and shelter to the capital's riot victims. In New York, . . . surburbanites signed up for a massive "clean-in" this week in the city's slums.[62]

The point is not the *accuracy* of the reports -- other contemporary sources document such gestures -- but the *uniformity* of the response cited by *Time* and *Newsweek*. Not for the first time had they found unanimity of opinion about King. Reporting King's activities against the war, for example, neither *Time* nor *Newsweek* managed to locate one black American (other than clearly identified radicals) who did not think it odd that a winner of the Nobel Prize for Peace should oppose the war.[63]

Another strain of the theme was the symbolic association of King and John F. Kennedy. In varying degrees, the news magazines linked them as martyrs, thus fixing King further in his role as a prophet from the South. The initial report of *Time* noted that King's "death demands expiation, as did that of John F. Kennedy." King and Kennedy were joined most effectively as symbols by *Newsweek*, already busily creating the myth of a latter-day Camelot as its dissatisfaction grew with Lyndon Johnson. *Newsweek* found in the murder of King an analogy to the assassination of Kennedy that "was hard to escape."[64]

The element was most intense when the news magazines reported King's funeral. *Newsweek* again associated the two men most strongly, the vehicle for this being an editorial profile of Mrs. King:

> It was an old and remembered anguish. And once again, a nation of stunned television viewers found itself drawing strength from the calm grandeur of the victim's widow. . . . Coretta Scott King . . . was poignantly visible in an indelible image of contained grief. . . .
>
> On the day of the funeral Jacqueline Kennedy came to the house. For five minutes, the two widows spoke, leaning toward each other like parentheses around the tragic half-decade of national turbulence. "There was a powerful mood in the room," said one witness.[65]

Time implicity united the two widows in grief. In a caption, *Time* observed that Mrs. Kennedy "brought with her memories of another assassination, paid a sympathy call on Mrs. King before the funeral, [and] braved jostling crowds to attend the services." King and Kennedy also were symbolically linked through *Time*'s comparison of the rituals of mourning and through the two cities-as-symbols, Dallas and Memphis. In an essay on violence, *Time* recorded the comment of a Japanese diplomat: " 'Your poor country. I had thought that after Dallas this could not happen again. . . .' "[66]

The principal point of association was not King's and Kennedy's respective roles in dismantling segregation; rather, it was the fact that both had been murdered by snipers firing from ambush. Surface similarities of the assassinations aside (though it is difficult for journalists to put trivialities aside), a better case could have been made for an analogy between the deaths of Malcom X and King. Each man was murdered at a critical juncture in his career, and their perspectives of race in America were coming closer at the times of their deaths, certainly closer than King's and Kennedy's. After reading the stories of *Time* and *Newsweek*, it comes as something of a shock, in fact, to read King's statement that "no president has really done very much for the American Negro, though the past two presidents [Kennedy and Johnson] have received much undeserved credit for helping us."[67]

Summary

The symbolic resurrection of Martin Luther King, Jr., was no whim of *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News & World Report*. His death indeed had touched something deep in the American psyche -- all the more so because of the fate of many American symbols in the turbulent closing year of the 1960s. With their acute sense of audience and audience expectations, the news magazines hewed their material until their reports -- which emphasized the three major themes of King as a moderate, as a prophet from the South, and as a national symbol -- were brought in line with the expectations of readers. Thus did the magazines make sense of something that made no sense, an American symbol who achieved great prominence as a reformer and who turned to radicalism.

A number of matters had to be obscured or eliminated. *Time* and *U.S. News*

erased their implications of cowardice, and -- as did *Newsweek* -- explained away King's failure in Chicago, his criticism of the war, and the Poor People's Campaign, all of which represented in one way or another conflict with the larger society. His role in the anti-war movement was brushed aside as a digression from his true cause, or otherwise ignored, even though King was a highly visible critic of the war and the Tet offensive had legitimated opposition to the war. The failure of the Chicago campaign became no more complicated than the rejection of King's leadership by militants, thus passing over both the cynical breaking of the agreement by Chicago's white leaders and the white mobs that attacked the open housing marches. Finally, although some note was taken of it, what would have been King's most ambitious and radical undertaking, the Poor People's Campaign, was reduced to symbolic insignificance beside the minor garbage strike in Memphis.

Certain other editorial tactics were used. Most obviously, the news magazines stripped away the radicalism of King's later speeches. Another was the deft coversion of King into a contrapuntal symbol to Carmichael. *Time* and *Newsweek* resurrected the villains of the old Southern movement as reminders of the glory days not only of King or the movement he led, but of America breathing vigorous life into principles violated by segregation. And there were contemporary reminders of the movement in the city-as-symbol, Memphis, its mayor, and the strike that became, in *Time*'s words, the proximate cause of King's death.

The news magazines also smoothed over some awkwardness, the absence of President Johnson from King's funeral being one such matter. The theme was further developed by joining King and John Kennedy as martyrs-in-common, and by providing vivid portraits of the deviants from the community of mourning -- racists who jeered at King's death and the blacks who dishonored his memory by seizing his death as an excuse to riot and pillage.

In sum, King was resurrected as a gentle prophet from a simpler era, when right-thinking Americans could see the way of justice stretching before them, and no need to ponder the complexities that bedevil men of conscience. The process was accomplished in a remarkably short period of time, encompassing King's death and funeral and perhaps a week or two more. In the end, radicalism interred with his remains, Martin Luther King was risen, the force of his symbolism directed by the news magazines into channels considered right and proper for an American prophet.

NOTES

[1]See Charles Fager, *Uncertain Resurrection: The Poor People's Washington Campaign* (Grand Rapids, Mich.; 1969), pp. 16-19. The quotation appears in a transcript of a recording of the discussion of the campaign at a ministers' conference sponsored by the SCLC in Miami, Florida, 22 February 1968. King Center Archives, Atlanta, Box 28, File 33.

[2]*Newsweek*, " 'I've Been to the

Mountaintop,' " 15 April 1968, p. 38.

[3]*Time*, "Visions of the Promised Land," 12 April 1968, p. 20.

[4]*Ibid.* The excerpt was from King's Nobel laureate speech. For the statement attacking the war, see Martin Luther King, Jr., *Speeches by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., About the War in Vietnam* (New York: n.d.), p. 6

[5]*U.S. News and World Report*, " 'Even If I die in the Struggle --" 15 April 1968, p. 33

[6]*U.S. News and World Report*, "As 200,000 Marched in Washington --" 9 September 1963, p. 40.

[7]*Time*, "The Assassination," 12 April 1968, p. 18; *U.S. News & World Report*, "Dr. King's Prophetic Words --"15 April 1968, p. 34. See also *Newsweek*, " T've Been to the Mountaintop,' " p. 38, and *Time*, "Visions of the Promised Land," p. 20.

[8]*Newsweek*, " 'King Is the Man, Oh Lord,' " 15 April 1968, p. 37; *Time*, "Transcendent Symbol," 12 April 1968, p. 21.

[9]A possible exception was Senator Robert Kennedy, a late-comer to the anti-war movement.

[10]*U.S. News & World Report*, "More Violence and Race War?" 15 April 1968, pp. 31, 34.

[11]*U.S. News & World Report*, "Negro Leaders -- More Militant Now?" and "Washington Whispers," 22 April 1968, p. 19 and p. 22, respectively. See also "Insurrection: Outlook in U.S.," 29 April 1968, pp. 38, 39, and David Lawrence, "What's Wrong with America?" *U.S. News & World Report*, 22 April 1968, p. 108, for other references damning Carmichael as an insurrectionist; the former includes references to King as a moderate, as does "Now a New Shift in '68 Politics," 22 April 1968, p. 59.

[12]*Newsweek*, " 'King Is the Man, Oh Lord,' " 15 April 1968, p. 34; *Time*, "Transcendent Symbol," p. 19.

[13]*Newsweek*, " 'Take Everything You Need, Baby,' " pp. 31, 34, and " 'It May Be a Bell Tolling for Me,' " 22 April 1968, p. 24.

[14]*Time*, "Rampage and Restraint," 19 April 1968, p. 17.

[15]*Time*, "The Moderates' Predicament," 19 April 1968, p. 19.

[16]*U.S. News & World Report*, "As 150,000 Said Farewell to Dr. King," 22 April 1968, pp. 38, 39; *Newsweek*, "King's Last March: 'We Lost Somebody,' " 22 April 1968, p. 26; *Time*, "King's Last March, " 19 April 1968, p. 19.

[17]*Time*, "Transcendent Symbol," p. 21.

[18]*Ibid.*., p. 19.

[19]*Ibid.*, p. 21. The observation is borrowed from David L. Lewis, *King: A Biography*, 2nd ed. (Urbana: 1978), p. 394.

[20]The reference to participants in the Washington campaign appears in *Time*, "The Assassination," p. 18. *Time* simply noted that King had studied Gandhi, Thoreau, Hegel, and Kant at Crozier Theological Seminary. "Transcendent Symbol," p. 19. On King's study of Marx, see Lewis, p. 36.

[21]*Newsweek*, " 'King Is the Man, Oh Lord, ' " pp. 34, 36; "King's Last March: 'We Lost Somebody,' " 22 April 1968, p. 31.

[22]*Newsweek*, " 'King Is the Man, Oh Lord, ' " p. 37.

[23]*U.S. News & World Report*, "More Violence and Race War?" 15 April 1968, pp. 32-33; for the last

note in the echo chamber, see David Lawrence, "The Power of Reason," *U.S. News & World Report*, 15 April 1968, p. 108. The column containing the statement was first published in 1965 and was reprinted in 1968, almost certainly because of the rioting that followed King's death.

[24]*U.S. News & World Report*, " 'Even If I Die in the Struggle -- " p. 33. See also "Negro Leaders -- More Militant Now?" 22 April 1968, p. 20.

[25]*Time*, "Transcendent Symbol," pp. 20-21.

[26]*Time*, "The Moderates' Predicament," 19 April 1968, p. 19.

[27]*Newsweek*, " ' King Is the Man, Oh Lord,' " , p. 37.

[28]The Albany and Birmingham campaigns are cited by *Time*, "Transcendent Symbol," pp. 19-20, and are implicitly developed in *Newsweek's* statement that in Birmingham and Selma King learned to pick his spots and his antagonists. See " 'King Is the Man, Oh Lord,' " p. 37. The Chicago disaster is succinctly discussed by Louis Lomax, "When 'Nonviolence' Meets 'Black Power,' " in *Martin Luther King, Jr.: A Profile*, ed. C. Eric Lincoln (New York: 1970), p. 171.

[29]King's lecture to the SCLC staff appears as "A New Sense of Direction," *Drum Major*, August 1971, pp. 5, 8-9.

[30]*Newsweek*, "King Is the Man, Oh Lord,' " p. 37.

[31]*Time*, "The Faith of Soul and Slavery," 19 April 1968, p. 70.

[32]*Time*, "Transcendent Symbol," p. 20. *Newsweek*, " 'King Is the Man, Oh Lord,' " p. 37.

[33]*Newsweek's* rhetoric passed over hastily the fact that a number of alliances were made with King by people who did not share his belief in nonviolence. See, e.g., Slater King to Robert Williams, 10 November 1963, and Slater King to Clancy Sigal, 10 November 1963. Slater King papers, Fisk University Archives, Nashville, Box 2 Files 10 and 11, respectively.

[34]*Time*, "Transcendent Symbol," p. 19. *Newsweek*, " ' King Is the Man, Oh Lord,' " p. 37.

[35]*Ibid.*, p. 38. *Time*, "Rampage and Restraint, 19 April 1968, p. 17, and *Newsweek*, "Hot and Cool," 22 April 1968, p. 26.

[36]*Time*, "The Assassination," p. 18.

[37]*Newsweek*, "The Mess in Memphis," 22 April 1968, p. 33.

[38]*Time*, "The Assassination," p. 18, and "Posthumous Victory," 26 April 1968, p. 19.

[39]See *Newsweek*, " 'King Is the Man, Oh Lord,' " p. 36; "The Mess in Memphis," p. 33; "Price of Victory," 29 April 1968, p. 19.

[40]Some elements of *Time*'s earlier interpretation of Memphis recurred in an article about the city's two daily newspapers, the theme of which was that "the racial amity they thought they had achieved has dissolved. What seemed reasonably liberal yesterday is denounced as paternalistic today." "Hurt Pride in Memphis," 26 April 1968, p. 44. On *Newsweek*'s report of the peaceful -- if limited -- progress in desegregation in Memphis, see "No Bang or Whimper," 16 October 1961, p. 29. Pat Watters, "Beale Street and Points North: Memphis Is Also America," *The Nation*, 22 April 1968, p. 529.

[41]Loeb *did* exhibit some of the characteristics which *Time* and *Newsweek* cited. Nevertheless, the two magazines diluted or ignored

certain elements, including some previously reported, in the interest of completing a more satisfying symbolic portrait.

[42]The beginning of the strike is described in an interview with T.O. Jones, 30 January 1968, transcript of tape 228, pp. 30, 39. The national union assumed control among other reasons, because it regarded the strike as ill-timed. Interview with David Caywood, 20 May 1968, transcript of tape 141, p. 25. AFSCME President Jerry Wurf described his role in the Memphis strike, which included local negotiations, in an interview conducted on 3 February 1972, transcript of tape 305, p. 28, and passim. Sources cited above are in the Mississippi Valley Collection, J.W. Brister Library, Memphis State University.

[43]*U.S. News & World Report*, "More Violence and Race War?" p. 34.

[44]*U.S. News & World Report*, "What Union Won in Garbage Strike," 29 April 1968, p. 82. Only *U.S. News* cited the union by name.

[45]David Lawrence, "What's Wrong with America?" *U.S. News & World Report*, 22 April 1968, p. 108. The theme of a conspiracy also was developed in "Were Riots Organized?" 22 April 1968, p. 12, and "Insurrection: Outlook in U.S.?" 29 April 1968, pp. 38-41, passim.

[46]*Time*, "Who Killed King?" 26 April 1968, p. 20.

[47]The evidence suggests that *Newsweek* decided to omit the specific nature of the animus. There is little reason to believe that the FBI would have hesitated to provide the information; indeed, the FBI actively attempted with little success to leak derogatory material about King to the news media. See David J. Garrow, *The FBI and Martin Luther King, Jr.: From "Solo" to Memphis* (New York, 1981), pp. 123-128 and passim. On the FBI theory, which was quickly discarded, see Jim Bishop, *The Days of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York, 1971), p. 83

[48]*U.S. News & World Report*, "As 150,000 Said Farewell to Dr. King," 22 April 1968, p. 38.

[49]*Time*, "The Faith of Soul and Slavery," 19 April 1968; "King's Last March," 19 April 1968, pp. 18, 19.

[50]*Newsweek*, "You're Such a Brave Lady ... !" 22 April 1968, p. 32

[51]On Mrs. King in Chicago, see Lewis, p. 317. *Newsweek* briefly mentioned her speech at Harvard in "Newsmakers," 24 June 1968, p. 59.

[52]*Newsweek*, "King's Last March: 'We Lost Somebody,' " p. 26.

[53]*Ibid.*, p. 31.

[54]*Ibid. Time*, "King's Last March," p. 19, conveyed essentially the same message, though not as effectively.

[55]*Ibid.*, p. 26; "Periscope," 22 April 1968, p. 19.

[56]Harris Wofford, *Of Kennedys and Kings: Making Sense of the Sixties* (New York, 1980), p. 203.

[57]*Time*, "King's Last March," p. 18. *Newsweek*, " 'It May be a Bell Tolling for Me,' " 22 April 1968, p. 23.

[58]*Time*, "King's Last March," p. 18. *U.S. News & World Report*, "As 150,000 Said Farewell to Dr. King -- " p. 38. *Newsweek*, "King's Last March: 'We Lost Somebody,' " p. 26.

[59]*Newsweek*, " 'Take Everyting You Need, Baby,' " 15 April 1968, p. 33. *Newsweek* did report instanc-

es in which white Southerners joined blacks in honoring King. The point, of course, is that the foes of the old Southern movement, such as Wallace, were used in one way, and other adversaries such as Mayor Daley in another. Daley was also omitted as an adversary of King's in *Newsweek*, "Reading the Riot Act," 29 April 1968, p. 22, and *Time*, "Should Looters Be Shot," 26 April 1968, p. 18. Both stories reported the controversy of Daley's shoot-to-kill order to police during rioting in Chicago.

[60]*Newsweek*, " 'It May Be a Bell Tolling for Me,' " p. 23.

[61]*Time*, "Avenging What's-His-Name," 19 April 1968, p. 16. *U.S. News & World Report*, "Mobs Run Wild in the Nation's Capital," 15 April 1968, p. 9.

[62]*Time*, "Rampage and Restraint," p. 17. It should be pointed out, however, that *Time* and *Newsweek* praised some black militants who helped keep the peace in some cities.

[63]Curiously, only *U.S. News* managed to find a black who was not a radical and who approved of King's opposition to the war.

[64]*Newsweek*, " 'King Is the Man, Oh Lord, ' " p. 38. See also *ibid.*, p. 35, and "Not Since Dallas ....," 15 April 1968, p. 91. *Time*, "An Hour of Need," 12 April 1968, p. 17.

[65]*Newsweek*, " 'You're Such a Brave Lady...! ' " p. 32.

[66]*Time*, "They Came to Mourn," 19 April 1968, n.p. See also, "An Hour of Need," 12 April 1968, p. 17, and "Violence and History," 19 April 1968, p. 44. The latter noted that the murder of King and the subsequent rioting "reinforced a world image of America the Violent: a vast, driving, brutal land that napalms Vietnamese peasants and murders its visionaries along with its presidents." It neglected to add that King had contributed no little to that image by accusing the American military of using genocidal tactics. Some statements ran counter to the pattern. *Newsweek* reported, for example, that King had forced Kennedy to introduce a civil rights bill in 1963 by relentlessly pressing his civil rights campaign in Birmingham. And some of the thematic development can be attributed to the celebration of the Kennedy family underway in American journalism.

[67]The news weeklies no doubt regarded Malcolm X as an inappropriate symbol to stand with King; they were used as contraposing symbols often enough. However appealing the shared martyrdom of Kennedy and King, in actuality it would be difficult to sustain except in the superficial resemblances. Changes in the black movement between Kennedy's death in 1963 and King's in 1968 were simply too great to support a thesis that their perspectives on race were that similar. On the other hand, Malcolm X had changed and was continuing to do so at his death. In 1963, Malcolm X criticized King for using the tactics of "an Uncle Tom." In June of 1964, after his break with the Black Muslims, Malcolm X was reported to have offered to help King "in the racial struggle down South if the United States Government fails to take decisive action." See, respectively, FBI transcripts of interview with Malcolm X on radio station WUST, Washington, 12 May 1963, and FBI Field Office File, 20 January 1965. FBI

surveillance file on Malcolm X (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1978), Reel 2, microfilm, n.pp. For the assessment of Kennedy and Johnson, see Martin Luther King, Jr., "A Testament of Hope," *Playboy*, January, 1969, p. 232.

The Party Press and Freedom of the Press, 1798-1808

By Wm. David Sloan

When John Burk, editor of the New York *Time Piece*, criticized the administration of President John Adams, Federalist editors wanted him punished. "The most effectual means of ridding society of this pattern of wisdom, modesty, and excellence," wrote the editor of the New York *Commercial Advertiser*, "would be that of placing him on horseback for in that case he would speedily ride to the devil."[1] Correspondents in the paper suggested that Burk be prosecuted for sedition, tarred and feathered, imprisoned, or deported. One writer urged the public to "spurn from the society of freemen this wretch who is composed of the stuff of which the Spy, the Assassin and the Sycophant, is formed."[2]

In 1811 Massachusetts' Republican governor, Elbridge Gerry, issued a proclamation condemning the "vicious and prostituted writers" who were vilifying the "national rulers, patriots diligent and faithful in office."[3] A year later, he urged a general arrest of Federalist editors who opposed the war against Britain.[4]

These episodes are not historically important in and of themselves alone. But they occurred more than a decade apart -- the first in 1798 when the Sedition Act was in force and the latter after two Republicans had occupied the American presidency -- and they involved calls by both Federalists and Republicans for suppression of freedom of expression. Those differences reveal something about how little the concept of liberty of the press had developed between the time of the Federalist "Reign of Terror" and the time by which James Madison had succeeded Thomas Jefferson as president.

The study which follows suggests that even into the 1800s Americans believed in a limited concept of freedom of expression, one that perhaps was a little broader than what had prevailed in 1798 but certainly not one that can be confused with libertarianism. The study makes no claim to be an exhaustive analysis. It is simply exploratory. It does suggest, however, that the evidence provides good reason to believe that American views on freedom of the press in the early 1800s remained restricted. The years 1798 and 1808 have been selected as the boundaries for this study because they encompassed a period which many historians have assumed saw a t remendous leap in American attitudes about freedom of the press, a period which began with the Alien and Sedition Acts and stretched

---

WM. DAVID SLOAN (Ph.D., Texas) is an associate professor of journalism at the University of Alabama. He is the author of several articles and convention papers on the party press.

through the presidency of Jefferson.

Most historians have argued that the American tradition of freedom of expression from colonial times forward was a libertarian one.[5] Leonard Levy has been the most influential critic of the libertarian interpretation, providing solid argument that a libertarian outlook developed with the fight over the Alien and Sedition Acts between 1798 and 1800.[6] Reacting ardently to Levy's claim, a number of historians have made several arguments to attempt to show that real, practical advances indicative of libertarian attitudes had been taken years before Federalists enacted the Alien and Sedition Acts.[7] These views -- including Levy's -- appear too optimistic.

Why have most historians claimed that by 1800 America had a libertarian philosophy? The answer to this question is important because it helps explain why historians who have studied mountains of evidence have reached the conclusions that they have. Most historians who have studied freedom of the press have been libertarians and have desired to demonstrate that libertarianism has had a long tradition in America. It appears that some have fallen into the trap of considering freedom of the press a symbol of American liberty and part of a broader symbol of American nationality -- much in the same way that Thomas Jefferson has come to personify the same ideals. Other historians concerned about the "professional" autonomy of the press in its dealings with the government and its wide latitude in covering the news have shown a particular interest in establishing an early historical foundation for the press' freedom. The goal of historical research, however, is not to promulgate faulty perceptions of virtue or of professional practices but rather to penetrate into the reality of past human deeds and thought in search of truth.

Historians also have focused on the issue of freedom of the press outside the context of the surrounding political situation, as if Americans of 1800 thought of freedom as isolated from all other issues -- and as if the historian can give a true explanation of freedom of the press isolated from the environment in which it occurred. Obviously, freedom of the press did not take place in a vacuum. While Americans for generations had argued that such a thing as freedom should exist, their thinking on politics molded their perception of what freedom should be.

That the paramount aspect of the press from the late 1780s to at least the early 1830s was political has been demonstrated in other studies.[8] The political functions of newspapers played a crucial role in defining all other characteristics of the press, including the extent and nature of the freedom it practiced. During the Federalist-Republican period, covering roughly 1790 to 1816, political thinking was marked by passion. An "Age of Passion," the historian Marshall Smelser described it.[9] So intense was political passion that it colored Americans' outlooks on virtually all other public affairs, from religion to business to printing. Partisans on opposing sides of the political war believed only one side could be right,

and they expected their newspapers to be partisan, intensely partisan. Opposing newspapers -- supporting, as they did, falsehood -- could not be allowed to publish in ways inimical to the best interests of the nation. It was such thinking that essentially determined the American attitude that freedom of the press properly could and should be limited.

As a result, the essential American approach to freedom of the press seems to have been this: while claiming freedom for themselves, politically passionate Americans urged that their opponents' freedom be restricted. Each side in the partisan politics believed itself alone to be right. Political ardor outweighed any desire for broad freedom of expression.

The Alien and Sedition Acts were one result of this attitude. While some historians have argued that the Acts were merely anomalies atypical of attitudes toward press freedom, the Acts appear more likely the natural partisan outgrowth of prevailing attitudes. And while they were the most prominent attempts at suppression, they were only two of many methods employed by both Federalists and Republicans to silence their enemies. After the Acts lapsed, partisan feelings continued unabated, and attempts to suppress opposing views continued. Perhaps, as Levy argued, the debates over the Alien and Sedition Acts persuaded people to think about freedom of expression, but that thinking did not result in a revolution in attitudes about freedom of expression. The repressive attitudes showed up in various actions to suppress opposing editors and writers. The actions indicate that Americans after 1800 showed no lack of eagerness in attempting to abridge freedom of the press.

Federalists' Views

While the Federalists -- mainly as a result of their attacks on the press under the Alien and Sedition Acts -- normally are thought of as the primary persecutors of the press, both parties actively engaged in actions to suppress the opposition. Historians have disagreed on whether Federalists and Republicans differed in their attitudes about government power to punish seditious libel. Levy argued that in 1798 adherents of both parties believed subversive or irresponsible criticism was punishable. James Morton Smith, however, argued that Republicans believed in "unpunishable criticism of officials and laws."[10] When Federalists proposed the Alien and Sedition Acts, it may have been that Republicans opposed the laws as a matter of principle or perhaps they opposed them simply as the politic thing to do.

On the governmental level, though, Federalists clearly were more severe in their attitudes toward press liberty. While neither party believed in unlimited freedom, the Federalists' view was more restricted because of their narrow concept of the relationship of the public to the government. Once a representative government had been elected, Federalists reasoned, all men should support it. Opposition could be voiced at election time, but criticism of a legitimate gov-

ernment was treason.[11] To the argument that Republicans used to combat the Sedition Act -- that the best means of combating criticism through falsehood was not punishment but publication of truth[12] -- Federalists replied that reality did not bear out this line of argument, that falsehood was as widespread as was truth, and that truth sometimes needed to be aided by government legislation.[13] This line of reasoning led Federalists to the viewpoint that every government which depended upon public opinion must take measures to assure that it was not falsely accused. It could protect itself only by prohibiting libels and assuring that "none but pure sentiments and good principles" should be published in newspapers.[14] Such an approach was not simply a selfish motive of politicians in power, Federalists claimed, but the best means of preventing the people from being deceived about their government. "For Government willingly or weakly to suffer the people to be misled," a Federalist congressman said, "is to commit treason against them. It is our duty to defend them against deception."[15]

To charges that their methods abridged the First Amendment, Federalists replied that freedom of the press was not absolute and did not protect a person in printing what was against the law. "To punish licentiousness and sedition," observed Harrison Gray Otis, "is not a restraint or abridgement of the freedom of speech or of the press."[16] The First Amendment, the *Columbian Centinel* pointed out, was not intended to sanction "the most groundless and malignant lies, striking at the safety and existence of the nation. . . . It never was intended that the right to side with the enemies of one's country in slandering and vilifying the government, and dividing the people should be protected under the name of the Liberty of the press."[17] Republicans might complain about legislation prohibiting sedition, the *Centinel* observed, but "Benedict Arnold complained bitterly about the treason bill."[18] Federalists' actions after 1800 do not indicate that debates over freedom occasioned by the Alien and Sedition Acts persuaded them to abandon such a philosophy altogether.

Federalists and the Sedition Act

Despite these arguments, it is apparent that Federalist legislation was politically motivated and aimed at silencing criticism in the Republican press. The 1798 Sedition Act, the most notorious of the weapons used to muzzle newspapers, provided the clearest example. Federalists declared that the Sedition Act was necessary for national defense because of the threat of war with France and the internal danger posed by subversive Americans. "Threatened by faction, and actually at hostility with a foreign and perfidious foe abroad," explained the *Columbian Centinel*, the nation found the Sedition Act "necessary for the safety, perhaps the existence of the Government."[19] Subversive newspapers, claimed the Albany *Centinel*, could not be allowed to "paralyze the public arm, and weaken the efforts of Government for the defense of the country."[20]

The instigators of attacks on editors often were other editors. During the period

the Alien and Sedition Acts were in force from July 1798 to March 1801, newspaper threats were especially numerous. A New York paper recommended that publication of Benjamin Franklin Bache's *Aurora* and Thomas Greenleaf's *Argus* be forced to stop and that existing copies be burned.[21] "Traitors [i.e., Republican journalists]," declared the New York *Commercial Advertiser*, "must be silent."[22] Even before the introduction of the Sedition Bill, Federalist editors urged legal action against James Callender. "[H]ow long," the *Gazette of the United States* asked, "are we to tolerate this scum of party filth and beggarly corruption?. . . Do not the times approach when it must and ought to be dangerous for this wretch, or any other, thus to vilify our country and government. . . ?"[23] The editors of the *Connecticut Courant* initiated the sedition suit against Charles Holt by providing the federal district attorney with a copy of the paper they thought violated the law.[24] "The sedition law," claimed the editor Noah Webster, "has left room enough for lying and misrepresentation with impunity to satisfy any common enemy to the truth."[25] The New York *Commercial Advertiser* made this proposal as its guiding standard: "When a man is heard to inveigh against the Sedition Law, set him down as one who would submit to no restraint which is calculated for the peace of society. He deserves to be suspected."[26]

Twenty-five Republicans -- and no Federalists -- were arrested under the Sedition Act, fifteen indicted, eleven tried, and ten convicted. Most were editors.

Federalists and the Common Law of Seditious Libel

Similar to the cases brought under the federal Sedition Act were those executed under the common law against seditious libel. Using the common law to supplement the federal law, Federalists initiated a number of suits and obtained at least five convictions. Some of the leading Republican journalists were the objects of their prosecutions. In 1798, Bache was charged with libeling President John Adams, but he died before he could be brought to trial. The next year, state officials in New York initiated proceedings against the *Argus* at the insistence of Alexander Hamilton. The paper had reprinted an article from Boston's *Constitutional Telegraphe* charging that Hamilton had attempted to buy the *Aurora* from Bache's widow in order to silence its criticism.[27] Because the *Argus'* proprietor, Mrs. Thomas Greenleaf, was already suffering from an indictment under the Sedition Act and was too ill to stand trial, the state brought charges against the *Argus'* foreman, David Frothingham. He was found guilty; and, despite a jury recommendation of leniency, the court fined him $100 and sentenced him to four months in jail.[28]

Boston's *Independent Chronicle* also faced both the federal Sedition Act and state common law. While the federal indictment was pending in 1798, the state indicted Thomas and Abijah Adams for criticizing members of the Massachusetts legislature who had rejected the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions. Thomas Adams died before trial, but prosecution proceeded against his brother. During the

course of the trial, the judge delivered a Philippic accusing legislators who had favored the resolutions of aiding a "traitorous enterprise to the government of this country."[29] Abijah Adams was found guilty, fined, and sentenced to a month in jail.[30]

Also convicted under the common law was William Durrell, editor of the Mount Pleasant (N.Y.) *Register*. After apologizing, however, for his criticism of President Adams and pleading that punishment would leave his family without support, Durrell was pardoned. The court proceedings by then had left him impoverished and had forced the discontinuance of his paper. Common law proceedings in New York also forced John Burk to discontinue the *Time Piece*; but once Federalist officials had silenced the newspaper, they dropped the prosecution against him.[31]

Although the legislative and executive branches of government usually instigated prosecutions for criminal libel, the judicial branch was not reluctant to step in to punish political opponents. Federalist judges such as Samuel Chase were notorious for the bitter partisanship with which they ran trials. (In 1797 Republican Thomas McKean, then chief justice of New York, issued a warrant for the arrest of William Cobbett for libel. He conducted the preliminary hearing, however, in a highhanded manner, and the grand jury failed to indict Cobbett.) In 1801 the United States Circuit Court in the District of Columbia ordered the district attorney to prosecute Republican Samuel Harrison Smith for libel of the judges.[32] In 1811 a Federalist justice of the Massachusetts supreme court, Isaac Parker, charged a grand jury to investigate Republican newspapers, citing for legal guidance the common law of libel.[33]

Republican Views on Sedition

While Jefferson allowed the Sedition Act to lapse after he became president, prosecutions for sedition did not cease. Republicans believed state governments rather than federal government had legal jurisdiction over seditious libel.[34] When Republicans came to power, their actions demonstrated this belief. As a result, even though Republicans did not resort to a unified attack as the Federalists had done with the Sedition Act, states did try a few Federalist editors. The record of Republicans during the period clearly was not unblemished. Jefferson believed that "wholesome punishments"[35] could have a cleansing effect on the opposition press -- although, as he told Pennsylvania Governor McKean in 1803, he wished to be careful to avoid the appearance of carrying out a wholesale attack on Federalist newspapers. He wanted only a "selected" prosecution, "[n]ot a general prosecution, for that would look like persecution."[36] State authorities brought at least three prosecutions against Federalists: against Joseph Dennie of the *Port Folio* in Philadelphia, Brazillai Hudson and George Goodwin of the Hartford *Connecticut Courant* for criticizing Jefferson,[37] and Harry Croswell of the Hudson (N.Y.) *Wasp*. Only Croswell was convicted; his offense had been reprinting the accusa-

tion that "Jefferson had paid [James] Callender for calling Washington a traitor, a robber, a perjurer."[38]

While Republican prosecutions for seditious libel may not have been as numerous or as successful as those of the Federalists,[39] Federalists claimed that punishment invoked by Republicans for civil libel was greater and more punitive than punishment of Republican journalists had been under the Sedition Act. When a state court in Republican-controlled Pennsylvania fined John Ward Fenno $2,500 in 1800 for libeling a Republican, Federalists contrasted his fine with the $200 fine imposed on Republican Abijah Adams for libeling the Massachusetts legislature under the common law. "What a difference there is between the chance of a Federalists among Jacobins, and of a Jacobin among Federalists!" exclaimed the *Gazette of the United States*. "The boasted friends of liberty of the press inflict a tenfold more severe punishment, when their characters are canvassed."[40] With other, non-legal means of press intimidation such as beatings and mob actions, Republicans were as unrestrained as were Federalists.

Civil Libel

Even though trials for seditious libel were noteworthy because they involved the question of the press' right to criticize government, many more prosecutions of editors were brought for civil libel. The harsh language frequently used by the press encouraged many of these suits, but politics inspired a large percentage. It was common for a politician to be the plaintiff. One of the first such prosecutions was that of Boston's *Herald of Freedom and Federalist Advertiser* in 1791. A member of the state legislature brought this, the first libel suit in Massachusetts after the Revolution. Harrison Gray Otis, a leading Federalist politician, served as defense counsel. One of the most famous suits was that of Dr. Benjamin Rush against Cobbett in 1799. While it was based on Cobbett's criticism of the physician's bloodletting treatment for yellow fever, the fact that Cobbett was Federalist motivated the suit. Robert Goodloe Harper, one of Pennsylvania's leading Federalists, defended the editor. Rather than pay the $5,000 awarded in damages, Cobbett fled to England; and Republicans had succeeded through a civil suit in getting rid of one of their most annoying press antagonists. The suit in which John Ward Fenno lost the $2,500 verdict was brought by the Philadelphia Republican politician Alexander James Dallas.[41]

As in these suits, most defeats resulted only in monetary awards for damages. Sometimes these awards amounted to only a few dollars, but some were considerably more, the highest being $8,000. When editors could not pay the awards, they sometimes wound up in jail, where they stayed until the damages were made good.[42]

The frequency with which aggrieved parties brought civil libel suits reveals something about how efficacious partisans believed the suits were in threatening or punishing opposing editors. During the year in which Caleb Wayne edited the

Federalist *Gazette of the United States* (1800-1801), he was sued seven times. His successor, Enos Bronson, within another year matched Wayne's record.[43] James Cheetham by 1803 had been the defendant in thirteen suits.[44] His most famous antagonist was Aaron Burr, who sued him in 1805 for statements Cheetham had made during the congressional maneuverings over the 1800 election. By 1806 William Duane had been sued between sixty and seventy times, perhaps more than anyone else in Philadelphia.

Government Printing Contracts and Control of the Mails

Another typical method used by parties to attempt to silence opposition papers was to withhold or withdraw government printing. Whenever officials awarded patronage to a faithful paper, they usually took it away from a paper of the other party.[45] The editor of the Albany *Register*, a steadfast backer of Jefferson, complained in 1800 that even though he consistently underbid all other printers for government work, the state always awarded contracts to the Albany *Centinel*, a staunch Federalist newspaper and supporter of the "landed aristocracy" of New York.[46] The policy followed in regard to taking printing from the opposition and awarding it to supporters of the party was stated by Abijah Adams when he applied for government patronage after Jefferson's election:

> It is generally believed here . . . that those powerful engines of State, which have been laboring so long, and with so much success to sap the foundation of our happy Constitution . . . that those presses or their Editor, cannot, in the nature of things, receive the countenance and support that Government, which is so obnoxious to them and their party.[47]

Parties also were in a position to control the mails to the disadvantage of opposition newspapers. Neither party fully suppressed the other's use of the post, but blatant tampering occurred. Postmasters were political appointees, and opposition editors frequently complained that the postal service suppressed copies of their papers.[48] The egregious Cobbett and correspondents in his *Gazette* were so bold as to propose in the columns of the paper that postal control be considered to prevent the circulation of Republican papers.[49] While the Federalists ran the national government, Republican journals reported that stage drivers were bribed to destroy papers and that in one instance an army officer, finding a Republican paper on a stage, tore it to pieces while passengers applauded.[50] In 1803 Nathaniel Willis, getting complaints from subscribers that they irregularly received their copies of his *Eastern Argus* from Portland, Maine, told readers that he would forward copies of the issues that had been "miscarried, lost, or *suppressed.*"[51]

Legislative Restrictions and Other Legal Threats

If newspaper editors felt themselves victimized by postal interference, they had reason to feel even more threatened by efforts of Congressional opponents to stifle their columns. The most notorious effort was that of the Senate to punish William Duane for publishing the contents of a Federalist bill that would have empowered a thirteen-member committee to determine which electoral votes to count in the 1800 presidential election. The *Aurora*'s exposure of the bill embarrassed Federalist senators, and they pushed through a resolution to investigate Duane for his "daring and high-handed breach of the privileges" of the Senate.[52] Senators commanded the editor to appear before them to answer for his conduct. His defense lawyers, however, refused to appear because they believed the ground rules laid down did not make possible an effective case. "I will not degrade myself," said Thomas Cooper, "by submitting to appear before the Senate with their gag in my mouth." Duane, who already had appeared once before the Senate for preliminary proceedings, then wrote the body that he felt "bound by the most sacred duties to decline any further voluntary attendance."[53]

The Senate thereupon declared Duane in contempt and issued a warrant for his arrest. Even though Duane later claimed that he remained in Philadelphia, often at his home, after the warrant was issued, the annoyed Federalists collected $300 which they paid to twenty-three constables in an unsuccessful attempt to capture the "obstinate democrat."[54] Duane claimed that the entire episode was part of a Federalist plot to destroy the *Aurora* before the 1800 election.[55]

Samuel Harrison Smith encountered difficulties with Federalists in the House of Representatives following Jefferson's election. He attempted to obtain a seat for himself or a stenographer for the *National Intelligencer* on the floor of the House. Speaker of the House Theodore Sedgewick, a Federalist who was perturbed with the paper's reporting of House sessions, refused Smith's request. Smith then moved to the lobby but was expelled after criticizing Sedgewick's handling of rules of parliamentary procedure. He then tried to cover sessions from the gallery but again was evicted after complaining of Sedgewick's inability to make statements in an understandable manner.[56]

Besides taking such punitive actions against editors, governmental bodies frequently issued resolutions and proclamations condemning them. In one instance the Virginia house of representatives during Jefferson's first presidential term passed a resolution rebuking "the extreme licentiousness of the Federal editors in their abuse of the President."[57]

Perhaps more serious were criminal charges against and arrests of editors for political reasons. After Solomon Southwick, editor of the Albany *Argus*, opposed the election of Daniel Tompkins as New York governor in 1807, he was charged with corruption in connection with the establishment of a bank. Louisiana's military governor, James Wilkinson, jailed James M. Bradford, editor of the *Orleans Gazette*, more than once because Bradford politically opposed Aaron Burr, one of Wilkinson's political associates.[58]

Extra-legal Threats

As imminent as the governmental threats were the extra-legal dangers posed by angered opponents. Editors were mobbed, challenged to duels, beaten, and threatened with other violence. These perils were probably the most trying to editors because of the ever-present chance that they could occur. Intimidation took on a number of forms. Richmond Federalists formed an Anti-Callender Society dedicated to silencing the "miscreant" Republican editor James Callender. One of its intended methods was tarring and feathering.[59] When Justice Chase read a copy of Callender's pamphlet "The Prospect Before Us," he declared that "it was a pity they had not hanged the rascal."[60] Later, Callender switched parties, and in 1803 an irate Republican reader beat him for comments he had made in his newspaper. Anthony Haswell of the *Vermont Gazette* also was threatened with tarring and feathering and having his house torn down. Thomas Adams was considered another likely prospect for tar and feathers.[61] Because a "JACOBIN . . . should not be admitted into the company of honest men," Adams also was expelled from Boston's New Relief Fire Society, of which he had been a member for twenty-two years.[62] Only a few days earlier, Federalists at an Independence Day picnic had burned copies of Adams' *Independent Chronicle*.[63]

Opponents also used advertising boycotts and discouraged subscriptions to try to silence papers.[64] The Hartford *Connecticut Courant*, a Federalist paper, claimed it had procured a list of the subscribers to its rival, the *American Mercury*, and went so far as to threaten publication of their names,[65] as if they were guilty of a crime.

In 1799 a group of about thirty men, including a number of off-duty militiamen, brutally attacked Duane. The band entered the *Aurora* office; and while some members held the pressmen and other staff workers at bay with swords and guns, other grabbed Duane and beat him over the head with a pistol butt. Then they knocked him downstairs and dragged him into the courtyard, where the mob repeated the assault. Kicked while lying senseless on the ground, Duane might have been killed had not his sixteen-year-old son thrown himself across his father's body. A number of Republicans then arrived and dispersed the assailants. That night an armed guard of Republicans stationed themselves at the *Aurora* office to provide protection.[66] Earlier in the year, Federalists attacked Duane and three other Republicans attempting to get Philadelphia residents to sign a petition opposing the Alien Act. One of the Republicans, Dr. James Reynolds, drew a gun -- apparently for protection -- at which time law officers arrived and arrested Duane and his companions for creating a seditious riot.[67] When Duane complained about conditions in the Philadelphia jail, the *Gazette of the United States* commented, "What a pity there is no Gallows in Pennsylvania that he might have an opportunity of abusing his last enemy in this world."[68]

Papers were assaulted with alarming frequency. Soldiers beat Jacob Schneider of the Reading *Adler* in Reading, Pennsylvania, during Adams' presidency. A mob attacked Thomas Greenleaf's New York *Argus* after he made light of a Fed-

eralist parade. Even though Greenleaf escaped, the mob vandalized the office and print shop. At one time or another, mobs threatened numerous newspaper offices and printing facilities with destruction.[69]

Assaults on editors by individuals occurred all too frequently. In 1806 Benjamin Austin got into an argument with Thomas O. Selfridge, a member of a Federalist committee in Boston. Selfridge called Austin a "COWARD, a LIAR, and a SCOUNDREL" in a newspaper advertisement.[70] Austin responded that his opponent's charges were "false and insolent."[71] The next day Selfridge met Austin's nineteen-year-old son, Charles, on the street and, after the two exchanged some heated words, drew a pistol and shot the youth through the heart. Selfridge was tried for murder but acquitted. In Raleigh, North Carolina, in 1804 William Boylan, Federalist editor of the *Minerva*, attacked Joseph Gales of the *Register* with a cane on the steps of the state capitol. Gales' injuries were such that he had to suspend his paper for one issue. After resuming publication, Gales told readers that Boylan proved that he was a "cold-blooded assassinator of private character"[72] and suggested that it was Boylan who was responsible for a fire earlier in the year that had destroyed the *Register* office. Gales then sued Boylan for assault and won.[73] While actual violence was not uncommon, editors received threats even more often. In 1802, for example, a Republican candidate for Congress, angered by articles in the Boston *Gazette*, told its editor that he would shoot him on sight if the criticism were not stopped.[74]

Another form of intimidation, one considered honorable by the code of the day, was a challenge to a duel. William Coleman and James Cheetham were involved in more than their share of such affairs. Indeed, only their arrest averted a duel between the two in 1801. In the eyes of some Republicans, the affair cast doubt on Coleman's courage, and a Captain Thompson later publicly suggested that Coleman was a coward. Coleman then challenged Thompson to a duel. It took place in 1803, with Cheetham acting as Thompson's second, and Coleman killed Thompson. Coleman frequently got into quarrels and in one fight was beaten so badly that he was physically impaired the remainder of his life.[75] After Cheetham deserted Burr, a friend of Burr, Matthew Davis, marched down New York's Wall Street with gun in hand looking to shoot the editor on sight. Cheetham cautiously kept out of the way, and bloodshed was avoided. John Burk of the New York *Time Piece* was killed in a duel in 1808, and Matthew Carey of Philadelphia received a wound that took a year to heal. Joseph Street of the *Western World* in Frankfort, Kentucky, after exposing Burr's 1806 conspiracy, fought one duel with a member of the conspiracy and after receiving several other challenges announced that he had "concluded to file the challenges regularly as they are received, and from time to time give a list of them in the *Western World*."[76]

Conclusion

Such actions give reason to question the historical assumption that Americans

held a broad libertarian philosophy in the early 1800s. Could they have been expected to do so? It is unlikely that, in a climate of passionate partisanship such as existed then, libertarian ideas on freedom of the press could flourish. Editors and politicians expected opposition newspapers to stick to the truth; and when truth comprised primarily those ideas with which ardent partisans agreed, there was little room for opposing views. Jefferson, considered by some historians to be one of the most libertarian thinkers of the period, epitomized the prevailing attitude on freedom of the press in a letter he wrote Pennsylvania Governor McKean in 1803. Suggesting that some Federalist editors who criticized Republican office-holders should be brought to trial, he observed:

> The federalists having failed in destroying the freedom of the press by their gag-laws, seem to have attacked it in an opposite form, that is by pushing it's licentiousness & it's lying to such a degree of prostitution as to deprive it of all credit. And the fact is that so abandoned are the tory presses in this particular that even the least informed of the people have learnt that nothing in a newspaper is to be believed. This is a dangerous state of things, and the press ought to be restored to it's credibility if possible.[77]

Jefferson's solution for correcting opposing newspapers was predictable for the party press era. "The restraints provided by the laws of the states are sufficient for this if applied," he confided to McKean. "I have . . . long thought that a few prosecutions of the most prominent offenders would have a wholesome effect in restoring the integrity of the presses."

NOTES

[1]June 18, 1798.

[2]June 11 and July 3, 1798.

[3]Quoted in George A. Billias, *Elbridge Gerry* (New York, 1976), pp. 321-322.

[4]To Samuel Dana, June 27, 1812, Massachusetts Historical Society.

[5]I've analyzed historians' views in the historiographical paper "Historical Interpretations of American Freedom of the Press, 1690-1805," American Journalism Historians Association, National Convention, Tuscaloosa, Ala., Oct. 6-8, 1983. (Copies of the paper are available from the author upon request.)

[6]Leonard Levy, *Freedom of Speech and Printing in Early American History: Legacy of Suppression* (Cambridge, Mass., 1960).

[7]See especially Dwight Teeter, "Press Freedom and the Public Printing: Pennsylvania, 1775-83," *Journalism Quarterly*, 45 (1968), pp. 445-451, and "The Printer and the Chief Justice: Seditious Libel in 1782-83," *Journalism Quarterly*, 45 (1968), pp. 235-242 and 260. Other historians who may be numbered among Levy's critics include Harold Nelson, Lawrence H. Leder, John D. Stevens, Cathy Covert, Mary Ann Yodelis, Jeffrey A. Smith, James Russell Wiggins, Irving Brant, Gary Huxford, and Richard Buel Jr.

[8]See, for example, Wm. David Sloan, "The Early Party Press: The Newspaper Role in American Politics, 1788-1812," *Journalism History*, 9 (1982), pp. 18-24; and Gerald J. Baldasty, "The Press and Politics in the Age of Jackson," *Journalism Monographs*, 89 (1984).

[9]"The Federalist Period as an Age of Passion," *American Quarterly*, X (Winter 1958), pp. 391-414.

[10]*Freedom's Fetters: The Alien and Sedition Laws and American Civil Liberties* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1956).

[11]*Columbian Centinel*, Oct. 5, 1798; New York *Gazette and General Advertiser*, Aug. 13, 1798.

[12]Philadelphia *Aurora*, May 10, 1798.

[13]Richmond *Enquirer*, June 21, 1798.

[14]*Russell's Gazette*, June 7, 1798.

[15]Quoted in John C. Miller, *Crisis in Freedom: The Alien and Sedition Acts* (Boston, 1951), pp. 59-60.

[16]*Aurora*, Feb. 28, 1800.

[17]July 7, 1798.

[18]July 18, 1797.

[19]Jan. 1, 1799.

[20]July 20, 1798.

[21]Hudson *Gazette*, Aug. 7, 1798.

[22]April 20, 1798.

[23]April 24, 1798.

[24]*Aurora*, Jan. 17, 1800.

[25]*Massachusetts Mercury*, June 18, 1799.

[26]Dec. 29, 1798. For other examples of Federalist editors' support of the Sedition Act, see *Spooner's Vermont Journal*, Oct. 15, 1798; *Gazette of the United States*, June 28, 1798; Albany *Centinel*, July 20, 1798; *Columbian Centinel*, Oct. 5, 1798; and *Connecticut Courant*, Nov. 26, 1798.

[27]Reprinted in the New York *Argus*, Nov. 6, 1799.

[28]For details of the case, see Smith, pp. 400-414.

[29]*Independent Chronicle*, March 7, 1799.

[30]For details of the case, see Smith, pp. 253-57, and Miller, pp. 122-23.

[31]For details of the case, see Smith, pp. 204-20 and 385-90.

[32]Miller, p. 65.

[33]Boston *Patriot*, Dec. 28, 1811.

[34]Thomas Jefferson to Abigail Adams, Sept. 11, 1804, Andrew A. Lipscomb, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson* (Washington, 1904-05), XI, pp. 51-52. See also Miller, pp. 168-69, and Dumas Malone, *Thomas Jefferson and the Ordeal of Liberty* (Boston, 1962), pp. 67-68.

[35]Second Inaugural Message, March 4, 1805, Paul Leicester Ford, editor, *The Works of Thomas Jefferson* (New York, 1892-99), X, p. 134.

[36]Feb. 19, 1803, *ibid.*, VIII, p. 218.

[37]Richmond *Enquirer*, Oct. 17, 1806.

[38]Hudson *Balance*, Aug. 16, 1803.

[39]Richmond *Enquirer*, Oct. 17, 1806.

[40]Dec. 15, 1800.

[41]Hudson, p. 181; *Gazette of the United States*, Dec. 15, 1800.

[42]In the years after 1801, at least four editors were sent to jail for non-payment: John S. Lillie of the Boston *Constitutional Telegraph*, William Carton of the Salem (Mass.) *Register*, Nathaniel Willis of the Portland *Eastern Argus*, and Sellick Osborne of the Litchfield (Conn.) *Witness*.

[43]Information on Cheetham, Wayne, and Bronson is gathered from Jerry Knudson, "The Jefferson Years: Response by the Press, 1801-

1809," Ph. D. dissertation (University of Virginia, 1974), pp. 43 and 60; Frederic Hudson, *Journalism in the United States, from 1690 to 1872* (New York, 1873), pp. 145-46 and 182; and Frank Luther Mott, *Jefferson and the Press* (Baton Rouge, 1943), p. 247.

[44]Hudson *Bee*, June 14, 1803.

[45]*Aurora*, July 3, 1800; Cheetham to Jefferson, July 25, 1804, Jefferson Papers, Library of Congress; Charles Holt to Albert Gallatin, Nov. 29, 1801, New York Historical Society; Charles W. Harris to Robert W. Harris, Aug. 29, 1800, in Noble E. Cunningham Jr., *The Jeffersonian Republicans: The Formation of Party Organization, 1789-1801* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1957), p. 173.

[46]Reported in the *Telegraphe and Daily Advertiser*, Sept. 29, 1800.

[47]Adams and Ebenezer Rhoades to Joseph B. Varnum, Jan. 20, 1801, in Noble E. Cunningham Jr., *The Jeffersonian Republicans in Power: Party Operations, 1801-1809* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1963), p. 247.

[48]*National intelligencer*, Feb. 9, 1801; *Aurora*, July 14, 1800; *Massachusetts Mercury*, Aug. 22, 1800; Saco (Me.) *Freeman's Friend*, Aug. 20, 1806.

[49]*Porcupine's Gazette*, May 1798.

[50]*Independent Chronicle*, Nov. 19, 1798; *Aurora*, Aug. 20, 1799.

[51]Oct. 27, 1803.

[52]*Aurora*, March 14, 1800.

[53]*Aurora*, March 27, 1800.

[54]*American Citizen*, April 19, 1800.

[55]*Aurora*, May 27, 1800.

[56]Various aspects of this episode are recorded in Culver G. Smith, *The Press, Politics, and Patronage: The American Government's Use of Newspapers, 1798-1875* (Athens, Ga., 1977), p. 26, and Richard E. Welch Jr., *Theodore Sedgewick, Federalist; A Political Portrait* (Middletown, Conn., 1965), p. 207.

[57]Quoted in Mott, pp. 40-41.

[58]These episodes are recounted in Hudson, p. 266, and William Bass Hatcher, *Edward Livingston: Jeffersonian Republican and Jacksonian Democrat* (Baton Rouge, 1940), p. 132.

[59]*Virginia Argus*, Aug. 12, 1799.

[60]Quoted in Miller, p. 217.

[61]Northampton (Mass.) *Hampshire Gazette*, Aug. 8, 1798.

[62]*Russell's Gazette*, July 26, 1798; New York *Daily Advertiser*, July 27, 1798.

[63]Newburyport (Mass.) *Herald and Country Gazette*, July 24, 1798.

[64]*Porcupine's Gazette*, May 15, 1798.

[65]In Miller, p. 126.

[66]*Aurora*, May 16, 1799.

[67]*Columbian Centinel*, Feb. 20, 1799.

[68]June 23, 1801.

[69]These events are recounted in Daniel Sisson, *The American Revolution of 1800* (New York, 1974), p. 286; Alfred F. Young, *The Democratic Republicans of New York: The Origins 1763-1797* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1967), p. 120; and Claude G. Bowers, *Jefferson and Hamilton: The Struggle for Democracy in America* (Boston, 1925), p. 279.

[70]Boston *Gazette*, Aug. 4. 1806.

[71]*Independent Chronicle*, Aug. 5, 1806.

[72]Raleigh *Register*, Dec. 10, 1804.

[73]Robert Neal Elliott Jr., *The Raleigh Register, 1799-1863* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1955), p. 26.

[74]In Hudson, pp. 172-73.

[75]These episodes are recounted in

ibid., pp. 217-18, and Allan Nevins, *The Evening Post: A Century of Journalism* (New York, 1922), p. 49.

[76]*Western World*, Nov. 8, 1806.

[77]Feb. 19, 1803, Ford, VIII, p. 218.

Producers of the "Popular Engine": New England's Revolutionary Newspaper Printers

By Carol Sue Humphrey

For more than two hundred years, historians and journalists alike have asserted that newspapers played an essential role in the history of eighteenth-century America. Historians have long realized that newspapers constituted the most important source of information concerning public affairs during the Revolutionary era. Furthermore, scholars have particularly emphasized the usefulness of the press in rallying opinion against the British during the pre-revolutionary agitation as well as during the war itself. This awareness of the place of newspapers, however, has scarcely generated large numbers of scholarly studies on the public prints or the people who produced them. These printers should not be forgotten, for they collected, and sometimes wrote, the materials found in their weekly sheets. But who were these men and women behind the presses? Little research has been done on the printers as a group. This study proposes to fill this void partially by studying the printers of Revolutionary New England. Although records from the period are scattered and incomplete, some conclusions can be reached about the ninety-three people who printed newspapers in New England between 1775 and 1789.

In reality, New England printers differed little from other artisans. American craftsmen of the eighteenth century, although practicing a wide variety of trades, all had certain things in common. Most learned their profession through an apprenticeship system that resulted in passing the "art and mystery" of the craft from one generation to the next, even though the system, such as it was, lacked the formality or structure connected with printing in Europe. In New England skilled artisans lived in urban areas where there were enough people with money to pay for their specialized goods. Printers, particularly those who produced newspapers, fitted into this category of urban craftsmen, for their trade depended on population and commercial activity. Printing establishments tended to be small, family-run affairs, with a few apprentices to help out. Journeymen worked only in the larger shops. Most master craftsmen, including printers, maintained a firm position among the "middling sorts" of the population. The possession of a marketable skill enabled them to make a secure living for themselves and their families. Although few eighteenth-century craftsmen advanced into the upper class, most managed to keep from slipping down into the class of

---

CAROL SUE HUMPHREY (Ph.D., North Carolina) is an assistant professor of history at Oklahoma Baptist University. Her doctoral dissertation was an institutional study of New England newspapers from 1775 to 1789.

hired laborers.[1]

While sharing many common experiences with other craftsmen, printers also differed in some respects. It has been asserted that most eighteenth-century artisans could read and write, but literacy was obviously essential to the printer. Most artisans lived in cities; still, some managed to survive in rural areas by broadening the scope of their trade. Printers, however, could not function well outside urban areas because of the need for advertisements. Through newspapers, printers provided an advertising medium for all their fellow craftsmen, a service which could never be truly reciprocated. Finally, printers had the potential of greater impact because they did more than provide goods and services for the public: they informed and educated, with the possibility of activating on behalf of one cause or another anyone who read what they published. No other craft could make this claim.[2]

Several examples illustrated how, prior to 1800, the apprenticeship system in the field of printing provided the major means for learning a trade and acquiring an education. An apprenticeship, of course, usually consisted of a contract between the master craftsman and those responsible for the well-being of the youth involved, by which the master agreed to instruct the apprentice in the "secrets" of his craft in exchange for work. The master also provided food, lodging, clothing, and other essentials.[3] On occasion, a regular education would also be provided, as was the case with Benjamin Titcomb, who wrote home from Newburyport in September 1776 that he had a tutor who was an excellent musician.[4] In return for such provisions, the apprentice promised to serve faithfully the master craftsman and to do whatever was required of him for a specified period of time.[5]

The contract drawn up for Isaiah Thomas's apprenticeship in 1756 indicated what was expected of the two parties involved in such an agreement. Thomas's master, Zechariah Fowle, promised to train Isaiah in the printing trade and to teach him to "Read write & Cypher." He also agreed to provide food, lodging, and clothes for the length of the indenture and to give Thomas two full suits of clothes upon completion of the contract. Thomas's obligations consisted of the following long list of instructions:

> the said Apprentice his said Master & Mistress well and faithfully shall Serve; their Secrets he shall keep close; their Commandments lawful and honest every where he shall gladly obey; he shall do no Damage to his said Master, nor suffer it to be done by others, without letting or giving seasonable Notice thereof to his said Master; he shall not waste the Goods of his said Master, not lend them unlawfully to any; At Cards, Dice, or any other unlawful Game or Games he shall not play; Fornication he shall not commit; Matrimony during the said Term he shall not contract; Taverns, Ale-Houses, or Places of Gaming he shall not haunt or frequent; From the Service of his said Master by Day or Night he

> shall not absent himself; but in all Things and at all Times, he shall carry and behave himself towards his said Master and all theirs as a good and faithful Apprentice ought to do to his utmost ability during all the Time or Term aforesaid.[6]

Clearly, on paper at least, an apprenticeship was an agreement that should not be taken lightly.

Most printing apprentices served a term of five to seven years, bound over in their early teens and serving until the age of twenty-one.[7] There were, however, numerous exceptions, including Thomas. The Overseers of the Poor of Boston bound Thomas to Zechariah Fowle at the age of eight.[8] Apprentices also ended their term of service earlier than originally scheduled, for a variety of reasons. Some became proficient in working at the press and would establish their own shop after acquiring an early release. In other instances, the contract would be abrogated because one of the parties involved had failed to carry out his share of the agreement. On some occasions, the apprenticeship ended abruptly when the youth ran away in order to escape what he considered an intolerable position.[9]

While all printing apprentices did not suffer from intolerable conditions, the hours were long, the work hard. The day began at six and continued until dark, with only two short breaks for breakfast and dinner. During the early years of service, the apprentice functioned primarily as an errand boy and office cleaner. He ran errands all over town, cleaned type, swept floors, stoked the fires, and fetched water. With age and experience, the apprentice began to set and ink the type and run the press. If all went well, by the end of his service, the apprentice would be knowledgeable enough in the printing business to sell his services as a journeyman for whatever wages he could negotiate.[10]

Most journeymen worked for a master printer for several years in preparation for amassing enough capital to set themselves up in their own shop. Although not always successful, most tried at one time or another to establish themselves as master craftsmen in their trade by launching their own businesses. To indicate their final arrival at the pinnacle of their profession, many began the publication of a newspaper.[11] In fact, ninety-three printers did just that between 1775 and 1789.

Although an apprenticeship constituted the usual method for entry into the printing trade, it was not the only way in which a person acquired enough knowledge to be a printer. One could just be taught by someone in the trade (rather that going through a long period of formalized training.). Of the ninety-three printers in this study, forty-nine definitely served an apprenticeship to a master printer while twenty-four others were probably trained by an experienced relative or business partner. That leaves twenty unaccounted for, and many of these may have served apprenticeships. There is simply too little information available to make an educated guess as to where or how the twenty learned printing. Clearly, however, one needed the "blessing" of a person knowledgeable in

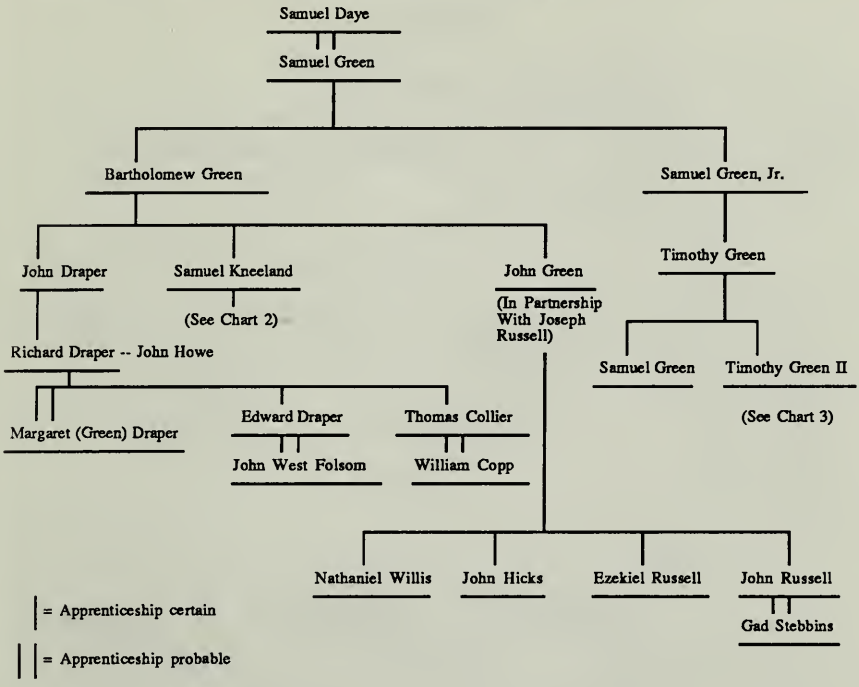
the field before embarking on a printing career.[12]

In the case of most of the New England newspaper printers, this "blessing" can be traced to the Boston area, the place where American printing began. Of the forty-nine printers known to have served an apprenticeship, thirty-seven either served their apprenticeship in Boston or under printers who themselves came from there. All thirty-seven, in a figurative sense, can be traced back to Samuel Green of Cambridge, who apparently learned the trade from Stephen Daye, the original printer in New England in 1630. (See the chart "New England Printing Apprenticeship System," Parts 1, 2, and 3). The Green family constituted a printing dynasty that flourished for almost two hundred years, reaching from Vermont to Maryland. Most of the printers in Connecticut and Vermont during the Revolutionary era learned their trade from a member of the Green family. Daniel Fowle of New Hampshire also proved prolific in training others. He tutored almost single-handedly all of the Revolutionary New Hampshire newspaper printers.[13] The networks that resulted from the apprentice system were useful in providing a support system for printers. Information and needed materials flowed through these networks. Isaiah Thomas's records contain numerous references to a variety of dealings with other printers, including Barzillai Hudson and George Goodwin of Hartford, Hugh Gaine of New York, and James Rivington of New York. Thomas counted John Carter of Providence and John Mycall of Newburyport among his personal friends.[14] All of the ninety-three newspaper publishers examined here expressed a kind of kinship for one another because of the business they all participated in, and these ties had many of their roots in the interconnections produced by the apprenticeship system.

The networks developing out of the apprenticeship system fell into two categories: business partnership ties and familial ties. Although the two often overlapped, they generally constituted separate groups. The outstanding example of partnership ties was between Isaiah Thomas and his apprentices. On several occasions, Thomas joined with a former apprentice in establishing a press in a new area -- with, among others, Henry-Walter Tinges in Newburyport in 1774 and Ebenezer T. Andrews in Boston in the 1790s, the latter the most profitable of Thomas's partnerships. Even when no official alliance existed, Thomas corresponded with his former apprentices, such as Anthony Haswell in Vermont and Benjamin Russell in Boston, and often had business dealings with them.[15]

Familial ties made up the majority of the New England printing networks. Daniel Fowle, who provides a good example of this type of network, had numerous dealings with his brother and his nephews, both in Boston and in Portsmouth. Upon the death of his nephew Zechariah, Fowle officially adopted one of his own former apprentices, John Melcher.[16] The best example of kinship links, however, existed in the Green family. The original printer in the Green clan, Samuel, began working in Cambridge in 1649, and his descendants carried on the trade for the next six generations. Connecticut's first printer, Thomas Short, acquired the appointment because the Greens were his in-laws. The Greens

CHART #1: NEW ENGLAND PRINTING APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM, PART #1

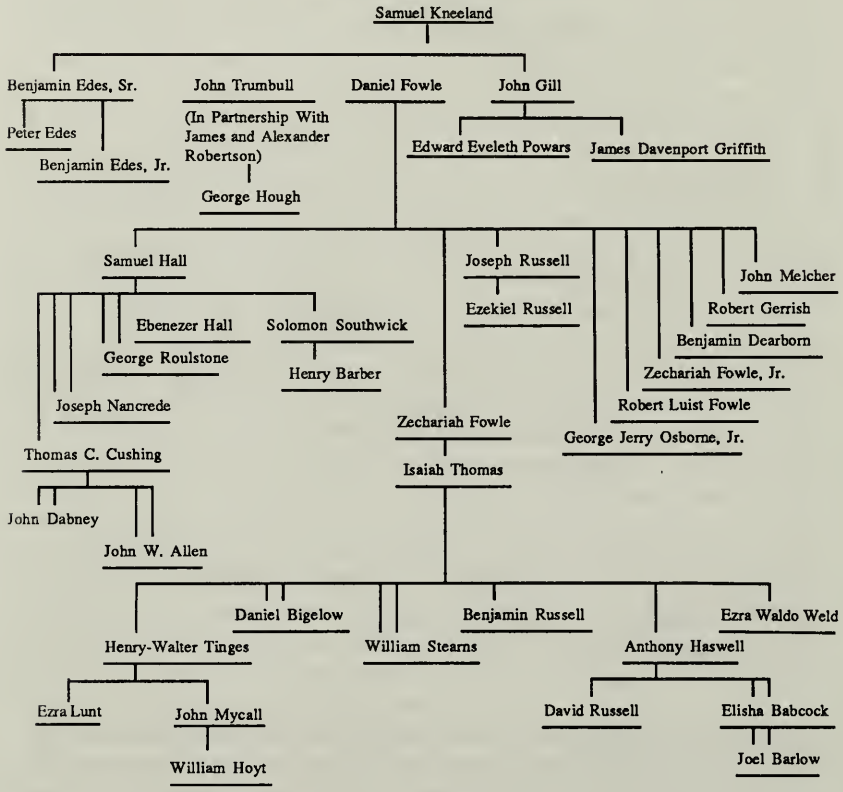


received the original job offer, but they decided to remain in Boston and recommended Short as a replacement. During the first half of the eighteenth century, the majority of the Green printers moved to Connecticut, establishing businesses in New London and New Haven. In the 1780s, the fourth generation of Greens and their in-laws, the Spooners, moved to Vermont, bringing that state its first printers. Throughout all of these moves and changes, the Green printers maintained ties with each other that provided a marvelous support network for carrying out their trade.[17]

Development of networks indicated a growth of a sense of professionalism among printers. Several studies have shown that this trend from trade to profession occurred among lawyers and the clergy during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[18] Along with the network system were other signs of a growing consciousness of printing as a vocation with standards and ethics to uphold. They can be most clearly seen in concerns expressed over unknown sources, plagiarism, and copyright.

Increasingly, newspaper printers expressed anxieties over anonymous contributors, often stating they would not publish a piece unless they knew the author's identity. Most of the printers apparently thought that they would never completely control their papers until the practice of accepting anonymous submis-

CHART #2: NEW ENGLAND PRINTING APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM, PART #2



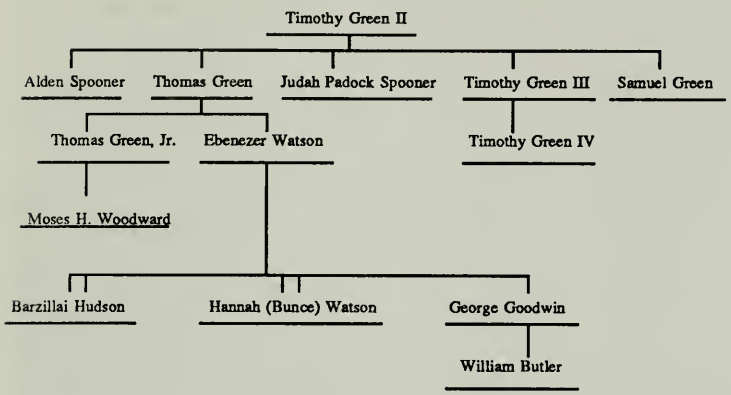
| = Apprenticeship certain

| | = Apprenticeship probable

sions ended.[19] John Gill found himself in the unhappy position of apologizing publicly to a Boston doctor for unsupported allegations in the *Continental Journal*. The unknown contributor had failed to appear to support the charges, and Gill felt he had no choice but to correct the error as best he could.[20]

The issue of plagiarism created problems for Revolutionary printers. In the world of mid-eighteenth century newspapers, the modern concept of plagiarism scarcely existed. Printers freely republished pieces from other papers without giving credit to the source. The advent of the War of Independence, however, led to efforts to acquire more accurate news.[21] Several printers, particularly Solomon Southwick of Newport, Rhode Island, took this a step further by stating clearly where they obtained their information. The 1780s brought a gradual increase in the number of printers who credited their news sources.[22] By 1789, the practice had become normal enough to elicit comment on occasions when it was not fol-

CHART #3: NEW ENGLAND PRINTING APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM, PART #3



lowed, as the owners of the *Herald of Freedom* discovered:

> Messrs. Printer, Please to give the compliments of a reader to the DOERS of a certain big "impartial" paper, and request of them when they pilfer paragraphs to give credit for the plagiary. The paragraphs republished yesterday on our national birth day, were an entire theft from the Salem paper of Tuesday last. The poetry was taken from the New Hampshire procession -- part from a New York poem -- and part from a piece published in Boston, during the session of the State Convention.[23]

Throughout the eighteenth century and beyond, American copyright law remained a muddle. During the 1780s and 1790s, authors tried to protect their works through the passage of state and federal copyright laws. By 1786, all states except Delaware had passed protection laws, but their strength varied greatly. Printers often found themselves in trouble when "duped by Authors, especially when they assume that character and are only mere Compilers." Some printers felt torn over this issue. They desired regulation in order to prevent possible court suits, but they also enjoyed having the freedom to republish anything they desired. Many, however, agreed with Isaiah Thomas that something had to be done to clarify copyright regulations. "Confident I am," he declared, "that it is in the power of the Printers: If they would be honorable to each other and to their

employers, to put business on a much better footing than it now is. A general plan for the good of the whole might easily be draughted and if the Printers would religiously adopt it, it would be greatly to the advantage of all."[24]

Printers' efforts to join together in a common cause also indicated a growing professionalism. Throughout the war years, newspaper publishers, particularly those in Boston, united in hopes of regulating their prices. Following the war, reasons for unity became less obvious until the Massachusetts advertisement tax of 1785 forced Boston printers to become allies in opposing the controversial legislation.[25] On February 10, 1785, twelve Boston newspaper publishers petitioned the General Court on behalf of all the Massachusetts printers, requesting that the advertisement tax be repealed because it damaged their businesses. They also issued an appeal to the public on July 27, 1786, urging their readers to work for the act's repeal since it threatened the survival of the press. These efforts constituted one of the earliest known instances of public cooperation among American printers.[26]

Although ninety-three printers plied their trade in New England at one time or another in the quarter of a century after Lexington and Concord, the number engaged varied from year to year. Twenty-five people published newspapers in 1775. Rising to twenty-seven in 1776, the number dropped to nineteen in 1777 with the exodus of the Loyalist editors. The count of active newspaper printers hovered between eighteen and the mid-twenties until 1784, when it jumped to forty-three from the twenty-seven of 1783. Obviously, the return of peace encouraged many journeymen to set up on their own. The number of newspaper printers leaped to fifty-two in 1785 and increased to fifty-five in 1786. It then dropped back to fifty-two in 1787 and down to forty-six in 1788. Although numerous papers died because of bad management or poor planning, another reason for the large drop was the impact of the Massachusetts advertisement tax, which, according to the printers, cut deeply into the profits of some and drove others out of business. In 1789, at the end of the period under consideration, forty-seven different people published newspapers during the year. The levelling off of the number of newspaper printers at a figure one-third higher than those active at the end of the war indicates that the status and stability of the newspaper press had improved.[27]

But who were the ninety-three New England newspaper publishers who thus far, with few exceptions, have been little more than statistics? If our knowledge is sketchy for some and nonexistent for others, we nevertheless have enough information about these entrepreneurs in the aggregate to make certain observations. First, a newspaper printer (or any printer, for that matter) in this period would almost certainly have been a man. Yet, there were three women printers -- Margaret Green Draper, Hannah Watson, and Mary Crouch; in each case, the woman took over a business left at the death of her husband, and each immediately took a male partner who did a great deal of the work. Two of the women did not maintain their businesses for long after their husbands' deaths: Margaret

Draper left Boston when the British evacuated in 1776, and Mary Crouch, after moving her late husband's business from Charleston, South Carolina, to Salem, Massachusetts, failed to produce a successful paper and quit publication within a year of its establishment.[28] Hannah Watson of Hartford, Connecticut, remarried several years after her first husband's death; and her new husband, Barzillai Hudson, replaced her as a partner in the printing business with George Goodwin.[29]

Knowledge about the printers' ages also can be gleaned from available materials. These men were fairly young when they entered the trade. In 1775, the average age of a printer was 34 years, and it wavered up and down throughout the period, falling slightly to 33 by 1789. The average age reached its height in 1782 when it stood at 36. Although older men always participated in the printing trade, the continual influx of new young men into the field kept the age down. Even so, printers were living longer. One study has discussed the relatively short lifespan of the colonial printer, adding that eighteenth-century working conditions in all trades tended to shorten lifespans.[30] By the time of the Revolution, and particularly after war's end, conditions had improved. A large majority of the ninety-three printers lived past the turn of the century in 1800. Of those dying prior to 1800, the average age at death was 44. Of those who survived past 1800, the average age at death was 66.[31] Several lived into their eighties and nineties, including John Melcher, who died in 1850 at 91, and Daniel Bowen, who expired in 1856 at 96. In general, a printer's life improved in the years after the American Revolution, particularly in the year following the institution of the new government in 1789. In an era of general economic prosperity, a printer's finances became more stable, enabling him to hire more help and thus, presumably, reducing the workload for everyone.[32]

If it is obvious that most printers were patriots during the Revolution, the subject of their wartime loyalties nevertheless calls for some analysis because of the resulting personnel changes in that profession. Several did openly espouse the British cause early in the struggle before being forced to flee. Four Loyalist printers left Boston when the British evacuated in 1776: Margaret Draper, John Howe, John Hicks, and Nathaniel Mills. James and Alexander Robertson, co-publishers of the *Norwich Packet* (with John Trumbull), also proved to be Loyalists and fled to New York in May of 1776. All of these printers except Margaret Draper reestablished their presses in areas under the control of the British army. In fact, James Robertson followed the army, establishing gazettes in New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston during the times when these cities were under British occupation. None of these printers, however, were able to reestablish their New England news sheets after the war ended.[33]

Another newspaper publisher accused of Toryism was Robert Luist Fowle of New Hampshire. The nephew of Daniel Fowle of Portsmouth, Robert Fowle published the Exeter edition of the *New Hampshire Gazette* from May 22, 1776, to July 15, 1777. In the spring of 1777, Fowle faced charges of counterfeiting the state currency, which he had originally printed. Though he denied the allega-

tions, he was arrested on July 15, 1777. While out on bail, Fowle fled to Canada, confirming the charges as far as most New Hampshirites were concerned. While it is unclear whether Robert Fowle was a British sympathizer, he did take refuge behind enemy lines. He actually had very little choice -- there was nowhere else for him to go. Even though the allegations against Fowle were never proven, he later received a pension from the Crown to compensate him for property seized by New Hampshire following his flight. Following the end of the war, Fowle returned to New Hampshire, married his brother's widow, and established a store in Exeter, apparently with few problems or recriminations.[34]

Robert Fowle's uncle, Daniel Fowle, owner of the *New Hampshire Gazette*, likewise had to fend off occasional accusations of Toryism, or at least lack of enthusiasm for the Revolution. In 1765, a rival newspaper sprang up in Portsmouth because some patriot leaders considered Fowle's stance against the Stamp Act weak. In January 1776, Fowle suspended publication of the *Gazette* after begin reprimanded by the state legislature for printing an essay by "Junius" against American independence. But before long Fowle resumed his publishing activity. In many ways, Daniel Fowle represented the mainstream of older printers in this period. Remaining in one town for most of his career, he ran a quiet business that did not stir up much controversy, since he tended to side with Revolutionary authorities at all times. Learning his trade from Samuel Kneeland of Boston, Fowle set up shop in Boston for a while but moved to Portsmouth in 1756, remaining there until his death in 1787. He backed independence during the war, though less ardently than some of his fellow printers from Boston. A conscientious printer, Fowle concentrated most of his efforts on the newspaper because he considered it the linchpin of his business. He produced some pamphlets and a few books while in Portsmouth -- none of major importance.[35]

With the arrival of peace in 1783, a new generation of printers began to make its presence felt in New England. These fresh faces, trained by older printers such as Fowle, would dominate the trade by the 1790s, as their predecessors retired or died. In 1784, fifteen new names entered the newspaper publishing field. The following year, they were joined by nine more printers, and each subsequent year saw the addition of two to five more.[36] While all did not succeed in their newspaper enterprises, they brought new blood into the trade. Most successful among this newer group was Benjamin Russell, a Bostonian who had learned his craft from Isaiah Thomas in Worcester. Russell, like several other younger printers, had experienced the Revolution first hand, serving two short tours of military service, in 1777 and 1780. In 1782, Russell received an early release from his apprenticeship, apparently because one of his stints in the army was a substitute for Isaiah Thomas. Returning to Boston in late 1783, Russell soon established the *Massachusetts Centinel* in partnership with William Warden. Russell's *Centinel* became one of the most important Boston papers in the years to come, particularly in the 1790s, under its new title, the *Columbian Centinel*. Russell proved a staunch Federalist and used his paper to support the policies of the

Washington administration. He retired in 1828, ending a long and distinguished career devoted almost exclusively to newspaper publishing.[37]

Whereas most of the printers of the postwar era followed quiet publishing careers, still others exhibited a variety of skills and interests that had little to do with printing. Anthony Haswell, a former apprentice of Isaiah Thomas, wrote ballads and poetry.[38] John Mycall of Newburyport conducted a series of experiments with balloons in 1785.[39] The best known in this group was undoubtedly Thomas, enterprising publisher of Worcester's *Massachusetts Spy*, who became active in preserving the records of the Revolution and the early Republic. With a keen sense for the future, Thomas particularly urged people to save their old newspapers; and in 1812 he founded the American Antiquarian Society to further this mission.[40]

New England's Revolutionary printers included a substantial minority who, failing to remain in the business very long, apparently conceived of printing either as a sideline or as a temporary occupation. Several in this category evidently provided capital for someone else's operation. While receiving credit on a newspaper's masthead and doing some of the work, they were hardly the real printers. Ezra Lunt, who fits this mold, ventured into the printing field only once, working with Henry-Walter Tinges in Newburyport from 1774 to 1775. He later ran a profitable stage route to Boston and managed a tavern in Newburyport.[41] At least three printers left the profession in order to do something else. Benjamin Titcomb of Portland, Maine, became a Baptist minister, and Daniel Bowen of New Haven and elsewhere exhibited wax works in Boston and Philadelphia.[42] Benjamin Dearborn of Portsmouth tried an interesting variety of money-making ventures after he left printing. He ran a store before becoming an auctioneer, opening a school for girls, and establishing an "intelligence office" or information exchange center. He also invented a set of scales and an engine and made some improvements in the standard printing press.[43]

Although it was an unusual occurrence during the eighteenth-century, a few college graduates involved themselves in printing enterprises. William Stearns and Daniel Bigelow, both Harvard graduates, managed the *Massachusetts Spy* from June 1776 to August 1777, apparently to ensure its continued existence after Isaiah Thomas left for Salem.[44] Josiah Meigs, with a Yale degree, helped manage the *New Haven Gazette* and the *New Haven Gazette, and Connecticut Magazine* from 1784 to 1789. Meigs continued an illustrious career after his departure from New Haven in 1789, practicing law in Bermuda from 1789 to 1794; teaching mathematics, natural philosophy, and chemistry at Yale from 1794 to 1801; acting as President of the University of Georgia from 1801 to 1810; and serving as United States Surveyor General from 1812 to 1814.[45] Probably the most famous of these college graduates who took a hand in the production of a Revolutionary newspaper was Joel Barlow. Graduating from Yale in 1778, Barlow taught for several years and then served as a chaplain in the Continental Army. During 1784 and 1785, he partnered with Elisha Babcock in publishing

the *American Mercury* in Hartford, Connecticut. Barlow, a poet and author of the "Vision of Columbus," worked hard throughout the 1780s to acquire adequate copyright laws. In 1788, he entered government service as a diplomat, serving in France, Great Britain, and Russia.[46]

Other printers besides Barlow filled government posts at both the national and state levels. Some, including John Carter and Isaiah Thomas, served as postmasters under both the British and the new United States governments.[47] A few also entered the Continental Army during the Revolution: Benjamin Russell, Joel Barlow, and John Melcher, among others;[48] while Judah Paddock Spooner sailed as a privateersman in 1777. Captured after several successful voyages, he ended his military career on board the British prison ship *The Old Jersey*.[49] Others, such as Benjamin Edes, Thomas Adams, and Edward E. Powars, paid fines in order to avoid actual military duty.[50] Finally, one New England printer held a major post in the Revolutionary forces during the war: Solomon Southwick served as Rhode Island's commissary general, a post of great importance which brought him a good deal of criticism for his handling of the job. Throughout his service, Southwick complained of the problems in acquiring food for the troops. Still, he did manage to keep the Continental Army supplied fairly well whenever it resided within Rhode Island.[51]

Southwick was an unusual printer because he held a higher social position than most newspaper publishers. At the time of his flight from Newport in 1776, Southwick held a seat in the Rhode Island assembly, an unusual position to be occupied by a New England printer.[52] While most printers held some form of public office, they did not acquire anything above the town level. One recent study of revolutionary Boston concluded that wealthy men continued to monopolize the more important posts, as they had done prior to the war.[53] Printers did not fall into that group. Although the posts filled by these men varied a great deal, they tended to be minor. Their jobs ranged from justice of the peace and town constable to hogreeve and coroner. The most popular appointments for printers were clerk of the market and surveyor of boards, but a few did achieve more prestigious local offices.[54] Barzillai Hudson and Timothy Green secured seats on the Common Councils of Hartford and New London, respectively.[55] Timothy Green also served one term in the Connecticut assembly, from 1780 to 1781.[56] Josiah Meigs performed as the city clerk of New Haven from 1784 until he left in 1789.[57] All of these posts, while not insignificant on the local level, brought minimal influence beyond the town. Not until the 1790s did printers begin regularly to hold positions on the state level. Still, government leaders sought their advice and support on occasion. For example, in 1788, Governor John Hancock of Massachusetts asked Isaiah Thomas to recommend someone as a candidate for Worcester County sheriff.[58] Even though printers did not generally hold state office, their opinions carried weight among those in power because government leaders, recognizing the impact of newspapers on the general populace, did not wish to alienate the men who directed them.

The printer was an artisan and a tradesman, a man who worked with his hands. The product of his hands, however, had the potential of influencing everyone and thus shaping public affairs. Still, many people did not consider printing a fit profession for an educated person. (As stated earlier, few college graduates entered the printing profession.)[59] In 1781, George Hough wrote of resigning himself to earning a living "by hard labour, among the rest of the mechanical tribes. I once had the prospect of attaining to some other employment; but it is all vanished, and I am left as it were to make the best use of a bad bargain." Clearly, Hough did not have a very high opinion of printing as a profession.[60]

Other indications of confusion over the status of printers appeared in newspaper pages. Because some people had difficulty joining possession of a good character with the job of publishing a newspaper, printers often used eulogies of their fellows to defend their profession. When John Gill died in 1785, his former partner, Benjamin Edes, praised him as "a friend to his country and mankind, whose integrity and industry were equally conspicuous, and not to be unnoticed, though in the vehicle of a newspaper. . . ."[61] Daniel Fowle's death in 1787 produced the comment that he had "as good a Character as almost any upon this continent." Moreover, "he confined himself to his own private walk in life, wisely avoiding the dangerous quicksands of politics, and never unnecessarily interested himself in polemic subjects."[62] Even though the printers' actions during the war had shown that the newspapers could be used very effectively in the political arena, many people were still unsure about the role the printer should play in the community.

Still, no one could deny that a printer influenced his readers through the pages of his newspaper. Just the fact that almost everyone in any given community either read the newspaper or had it read to them underscored the potential influence of the printer. This latent power meant that the printer could not be dismissed or ignored. For some printers, this meant a position of some stature in the community, indicated by a certain amount of deference by their fellow citizens. By the middle of the 1780s, a number of printers, including Isaiah Thomas and Timothy Green III, were being referred to as "Esquire," a form of address indicating a high status in the community. Still, printers remained mechanics in the eyes of many, and their social position remained unclear throughout the period, leaving questions that would not be settled until the separation of the functions of printer and editor, a process which began in the 1790s.[63]

Although the recognizable social level of printers cannot easily be determined, certain generalizations about the overall financial standing of these New Englanders are possible. A previous investigation of the estates of Boston printers affirmed that those printers who published newspapers experienced the most prosperity.[64] In general, this conclusion is correct, but estate inventories and wills are scarce; many people died intestate because they did not take time to make a will. However, existing records do provide at least an indication of the overall business success of New England's revolutionary era printers. The value of the

TABLE 1: VALUE OF PRINTER'S ESTATES AT TIME OF DEATH (in 1970 dollars)

NAME	YEAR OF DEATH	PERSONAL ESTATE	REAL ESTATE	TOTAL ESTATE
Ebenezer Watson	1777	____	____	$ 7,740.02
John Gill	1785	$ 1,068.01	$ 8,038.15	9,106.16
William Warden	1786	____	____	* 868.18
John Norse	1790	1,451.31	1,260.12	2,711.43
Timothy Green	1796	____	____	9,824.96
Ezekiel Russell	1796	____	____	519.83
Samuel Green	1799	____	____	2,753.70
Thomas Adams	1799	9,945.36	9,932.00	19,877.36
Benjamin Edes, Jr.	1801	____	____	203.84
John Trumbull	1802	____	____	7,099.18
Benjamin Edes, Sr.	1803	____	____	8,635.30
John Fleet	1806	2,955.86	78,341.32	81,297.18
Thomas Green	1812?	1,574.78	4,813.20	6,387.98
Roger Storrs	1820?	____	____	* 175.90
Barzillai Hudson	1823	____	____	115,029.18
John W. Folsom	1825	1,304.91	11,765.60	13,070.51
Thomas B. Wait	1830	____	____	* 1,187.83
Isaiah Thomas	1831	8,790.79	13,293.60	22,084.39
Benjamin Russell	1845	3,573.80	41,599.80	45,173.60

*Died insolvent, with more debts than assets

The original figures for these estate inventories were converted to 1970 dollars using the wholesale price indices of Warren and Pearson for the period 1749-1890 and the Bureau of Labor Statistics table for 1890-1970. Source for these indices: -----, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970* (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1975), 1: 199-202.

estates examined in this study varied from Roger Storrs's $175.90 to Barzillai Hudson's $115, 029.18, but most of the printers who managed to establish their newspapers on a solid footing did well for themselves (See Table 1).[65]

Estate records provide indications concerning a printer's prosperity, but they can be used only when considering a person's lifetime success. In order to make statements about the Revolutionary era, one must turn to other sources, primarily tax records. Even here, the materials are not always in existence or accessible. Still, the records indicate that the years after the war saw the finances of printers stabilize and slowly take an upward turn. By 1787, Timothy Green III had enough free capital to invest in real estate that cost him £15 in taxes.[66] The real estate valuation lists from Worcester, Massachusetts, for 1778 and 1783 provide a nice portrait of the financial improvements in the lives of several printers be-

cause these lists rank taxpayers from highest to lowest. In 1778, Isaiah Thomas owned personal property worth £14 in taxes and was ranked 248 out of 345; and William Stearns ranked 217 and owned personal property taxed at £22. By 1783, Stearns, no longer in the printing business, had risen to 58 and was paying £1:15:9 1/2 in taxes. Thomas, on the other hand, stood at 40 and paid £2:7:10 1/2 in 1783.[67] Five years had made a big difference for Isaiah Thomas. In the years that followed, Thomas's finances continued to improve, and his position in the community rose with them. By 1815 he owned $19,720.37 (1970 dollars) in property and had served as a Judge of the Court of Sessions for the State of Massachusetts. He owned property in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont, as well as in Boston and Worcester in Massachusetts. Clearly, Thomas had become a man of substance.[68] The case of Thomas, however, is the exception rather than the rule. Few printers of the Revolutionary era achieved either his financial solidarity or his position in the community. One study of Boston estimates the mean assessed wealth of a printer in 1790 as £247, or approximately $2,146.55 (1970 dollars).[69]

The average New England newspaper printer of the Revolutionary era was a hard worker who had learned his profession through an apprenticeship to a master in the trade and then had established his position by opening his own business, more often than not in his early thirties. Through the apprenticeship system, he developed contacts with other printers that formed a useful network for acquiring news, information, supplies, and equipment. These networks demonstrate a growth of a sense of professionalism among printers. As indicated by the development of networks, as well as concern over anonymous contributors, plagiarism, and copyrights, the 18th-century pressman was increasingly conscious that printing was a vocation with standards and ethics to uphold. Politically, the New England printer supported the American side in the quarrel with Great Britain and used his newspaper to further the goals of the American Revolution. He eventually held some sort of political office, mostly on the local level, but maintained some influence on higher levels among leaders who appreciated the influence of his paper with the people. While not financially successful on a grand scale, he did manage to make a comfortable living and died with a fairly sizable estate to leave to his family. Although it seems that much of this success came after 1789, some indications of better things to come appeared in the 1780s, as Americans began to rebuild lives and institutions disrupted by the war.

NOTES

[1]Carl Bridenbaugh, *The Colonial Craftsman* (Chicago, 1950), 66, 123, 126-27, 129, 134-35, 156-57, 162-63; Ian M. G. Quimby, "Introduction: Some Observations on the Craftsman in Early America," in Ian M. G. Quimby, ed., *The Craftsman in Early America,* (New

York, 1984), 5-6; Thomas J. Schlereth, "Artisans and Craftsmen: A Historical Perspective," in *Ibid.*, 38-39; Jackson Turner Main, *The Social Structure of Revolutionary America* (Princeton, 1965), 274-75.

[2]Bridenbaugh, 148-49, 169, 176.

[3]Rollo G. Silver, *The American Printer*, 1787-1825 (Charlottesville, 1967), 3; Milton W. Hamilton, *The Country Printer: New York State, 1785-1830* (Port Washington, L.I., N. Y., 1964 [orig. pub. 1936]), 25-27.

[4]Benjamin Titcomb to Andrew Titcomb, September 1776, Andrew Hawes Collection, Titcomb Family Papers, Maine Historical Society, Portland, Maine.

[5]Silver, 3; Hamilton, 25-27.

[6]Indenture of Isaiah Thomas, June 4, 1756, Isaiah Thomas Papers, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts. The punctuation has been modernized to make the indenture easier to read and understand.

[7]Silver, 1-2, 5-6; Hamilton, 29-30, 39.

[8]Indenture of Isaiah Thomas, June 4, 1756.

[9]Silver, 1-2, 5-6; Hamilton, 29-30, 39.

[10]Silver, 4-8; Hamilton, 31-34, 39-40.

[11]Silver, 7, 26; Hamilton, 39-40, 45-46.

[12]Summary of material gleaned from the Printers' File (a card file of information on American printers prior to 1820 collected by the staff of the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts) and Isaiah Thomas, *The History of Printing in America*, (Barre, Mass., 1970 [orig. pub. Worcester, Mass., 1810]), 42-339.

[13]Printer's File, American Antiquarian Society; Thomas, 42-339.

[14]James Rivington to Isaiah Thomas, August 11, 1783, Hugh Gaine to Isaiah Thomas, November 10, 1788, John Carter to Isaiah Thomas, February 6, 1789, Isaiah Thomas Papers, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts; Isaiah Thomas to George Goodwin, October 19, 1780, Isaiah Thomas to Hudson & Goodwin, April 13, 14, May 8, 1786, June 19, July 27, December 20, 28, 1789, January 27, March 8, 22, June 30, 1790, February 3, July 19, 1791, January 3, 1792, July 20, November 3, 1795, February 1, 8, August 29, September 26, 31, November 22, 1796, February 1, 1797, January 24, 28, February 2, 8, 17, 26, November 1, 20, 1799, copies in Isaiah Thomas Papers, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts, originals at New York Historical Society, New York, N.Y.

[15]Stephen Botein, " 'Meer Mechanicks' and An Open Press: The Business and Political Strategies of Colonial Printers," *Perspectives in American History*, IX (1975), 152-160; Thomas, 179, 182, 277; Joseph T. Buckingham, *Specimens of Newspaper Literature*, 2 vols. (Boston, 1852), II, 5-9.

[16]Charles L. Nichols, "Fowle, Daniel," *Dictionary of American Biography*, 10 vols. (New York, 1927-1936), III (pt. 2), 560-561.

[17]Thomas B. Wyman, *The Genealogies and Estates of Charlestown, Massachusetts*, 2 vols. (Boston, 1879), I, 368, 371; William C. Kiessel, "The Green Family: A Dynasty of Printers," *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*,

CIV (1950), 81-93; Thomas Spooner, *Records of William Spooner of Plymouth, Massachusetts* (Cincinnati, 1883), 99, 73, 150-154, 157-158.

[18]For example, see John M. Murrin, "The Legal Transformation: The Bench and Bar of Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts," in Stanley N. Katz and John M. Murrin, eds., *Colonial America: Essays in Politics and Social Development*, 3rd edition (New York: 1983), 540-571; and Donald M. Scott, *From Office to Profession: The New England Ministry* (Philadelphia: 1978). My phrase "from trade to profession" is a reworking of Scott's title to fit my subject.

[19]*Boston Gazette*, May 18, 1778, May 28, 1781, June 23, 1782, October 3, 1785; *Independent Ledger*, December 3, 1781; *Essex Journal*, August 27, 1784, December 3, 1788; *Cumberland Gazette*, March 30, April 13, 1786; *Vermont Gazette*, May 29, 1786; *New Hampshire Mercury*, August 30, 1786; *Independent Chronicle*, May 22, December 11, 18, 1788; *Herald of Freedom*, December 8, 11, 15, 1788, March 17, 1789.

[20]*Continental Journal*, November 14, 1782.

[21]Frank Luther Mott, *American Journalism: A History of Newspapers in the United States Through 250 Years, 1690 to 1940* (New York), 132-33.

[22]For examples of increased crediting of sources, see *Newport Mercury*, 1775; *Vermont Journal*, 1784; *Continental Journal*, 1784-85; *Herald of Freedom*, 1789.

[23]*Herald of Freedom*, March 6, 1789.

[24]Silver, 111; *Boston Gazette*, October 18, 1784; Isaiah Thomas to Hudson & Goodwin, May 8, 1786, March 8, 1790, copies in Isaiah Thomas Papers, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts, originals at New York Historical Society, New York, New York; John Carter to Isaiah Thomas, November 15, 1792, Isaiah Thomas Papers, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts; Joel Barlow to Elias Boudinot, January 10, 1783, *Papers of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789*, Microfilm -- 204 rolls (Washington, D.C., 1958-59), #4, item 78.

[25]On July 2, 1785, the Massachusetts General Court instituted a duty on all non-official newspaper advertisements. The act was designed to raise money to pay off the state war debt. It operated until March 26, 1788.

[26]John B. Hench, "Massachusetts Printers and the Commonwealth's Newspaper Advertisement Tax of 1785," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, LXXXVII (1977), 199-211; Rollo G. Silver, "Aprons Instead of Uniforms: The Practice of Printing, 1776-1787," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, LXXXVII (1977), 177-179; John Clyde Oswald, *Printing in the Americas* (New York, 1937), 501-502; *New Hampshire Gazette*, May 20, 1785.

[27]Summary of material gleaned from Clarence S. Brigham, ed., *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690-1820*, 2 vols. (Worcester, Mass., 1947).

[28]Printers's File, American Antiquarian Society.

[29]*Ibid.;* Susan Henry, "Work, Widowhood and War: Hannah Bunce Watson, Connecticut Printer," *The*

Connecticut Historical Society Bulletin, XLVIII (1983), 25-39.

[30]In his study of American journalism, Robert Rutland noted that Isaiah Thomas made numerous references to the funerals of fellow printers in his *The History of Printing in America*. He also cites Clarence Brigham's reference to 36 widows who become printers as evidence of the early deaths of many colonial printers. Robert A. Rutland, *Newsmongers: Journalism in the Life of the Nation, 1690-1972* (New York, 1973), 13-14.

[31]Average age at death figures reached by computing the average age of all who died prior to 1800 (20) and all who died after 1800 (63). Figures not available for ten out of the ninety-three printers studied.

[32]*Ibid.* One example indicates that life could still be rough in frontier areas. George Roulstone, originally a printer in Salem, Massachusetts, pioneered printing in the state of Tennessee, arriving in 1791. He died in 1804 at the age of 37. Samuel C. Williams, "George Roulstone, Father of the Tennessee Press," *The East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, XVII (1945), 51-60; Printers's File, American Antiquarian Society.

[33]Kiessel, 85; Robert E. Moody and Charles Christopher Crittenden, "The Letter-Book of Mills & Hicks," *North Carolina Historical Review*, XIV (1937), 39-83; J. J. Stewart, "Early Journalism in Nova Scotia," *Nova Scotia Historical Society Collections*, VI (1888), 118-120; Marion Robertson, "The Loyalist Printers: James and Alexander Robertson," *Nova Scotia Historical Review*, III (1983), 83-93.

[34]Thomas, 333-334; Ralph Adams Brown, "New Hampshire Editors Win The War: A Study in Revolutionary Press Propaganda," *The New England Quarterly*, XII (1939), 36.

[35]Nichols, "Fowle, Daniel," III (pt. 2), 560-561; Benjamin V. Franklin, ed., *Boston Printers, Publishers, and Booksellers: 1640-1800* (Boston, 1980), 181-186; Robert Wilson Kidder, "The Contribution of Daniel Fowle to New Hampshire Printing, 1756-1787," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1960), 132-134; Frank W. Miller, "*The New Hampshire Gazette*," *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, XXVI (1872), 135.

[36]Summary of material gleaned from Brigham, *American Newspapers*.

[37]Frank W. Scott, "Russell, Benjamin," *Dictionary of American Biography*, 10 vols. (New York, 1927-1936), VIII (pt. 2), 238-240; Franklin, 433-437; Buckingham, 2, 9.

[38]John Spargo, *Anthony Haswell: Printer -- Patriot -- Ballader* (Portland, Vermont, 1925); Poem by Anthony Haswell, Haswell Family Papers, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts.

[39]*New Hampshire Gazette*, May 20, 1785.

[40]Clifford K. Shipton, *Isaiah Thomas, Printer Patriot, and Philanthropist, 1749-1831* (Rochester, New York, 1948).

[41]Thomas S. Lunt, *A History of the Lunt Family in America* (Salem, Massachusetts, 1914), 27, 48-50.

[42]Joseph Griffin, *History of the Press in Maine* (Brunswick: 1872), 34; Henry S. Burrage, *History of the Baptists in Maine* (Portland, 1904), 139: Printers's File, American Antiquarian Society.

[43]Emma Forbes Waite, "Benjamin Dearborn: Teacher, Inventor, Philanthropist," *Old Time New England*, XLII (1951), 44-47; *New Hampshire Gazette*, December 31, 1776, April 20, 1779, September 29, 1781, October 28, 1785, April 13, 1786, *New Hampshire Mercury*, April 26, 1785, *New Hampshire Spy*, January 30, April 24, 1787, June 28, November 21, 1788, April 3, 1789; Albert Stillman Batchelor, ed., *Early State Papers of New Hampshire, 1784 - 1790*, vols. XX-XXI of Nathaniel Bouton *et.al.*, eds., *State Papers of New Hampshire*, 40 vols. (Nashua and elsewhere, 1870-1895), XX, 457, 478, 489, 542, 586, 629, 727, 731, 736, 738, 770, 775, 781.

[44]Gilman Bigelow Howe, *Genealogy of the Bigelow Family in America* (Worcester, 1890), 74, 143-144; Clifford K. Shipton, ed., *Sibley's Harvard Graduates: Biographical Sketches of Those Who Attended Harvard College*, 17 vols. to date (Cambridge, 1933-present), XVII, 436-438.

[45]Franklin B. Dexter, *Biographical Sketches of the Graduates of Yale College With Annals of the College History*, 6 vols. (New York, 1885-1912), IV, 43-47.

[46]Dexter, IV, 3-16; Elias Boudinot to Governor William Livingston, November 25, 1782, Joel Barlow to William Livingston, July 21, 1785, William Livingston Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

[47]Shipton, 36; *American Journal*, April 1, 1779.

[48]Joel Barlow's Appointment as Chaplain for the 3rd Massachusetts Brigade, November 25, 1782, Joel Barlow Papers, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts; Scott, "Russell, Benjamin," 238-240; Isaac Hammond, ed., *Roles of the Soldiers in the Revolutionary War*, vols. XIV-XVII of Nathaniel Bouton, ed., *State Papers of New Hampshire*, 40 vols. (Nashua and elsewhere, 1870-1895) XIV, 239, 255-256, XVII, 23, 31, 38.

[49]Marylouise Dunham Meder, "Timothy Green III, Connecticut Printer, 1737-1796: His Life and Times," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1964), 97.

[50]Record Commissioners of Boston, *Reports of the Record Commissioners of Boston -- Town Records*, 39 vols. (Boston, 1876-1909), XV, 20-23.

[51]John Russell Bartlett, ed., *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, 1636-1792*, 10 vols. (Providence, 1856-1865), VIII, 356, IX, 81, 162, 254; Solomon Southwick to Jeremiah Wadsworth, May 23, 26, July 17, November 27, 1778, March 22, 26, 31, April 7, 1779, Solomon Southwick to Peter Colt, September 19, 26, October 7, 26, 31, November 5, 10, 21, 25, December 2, 4, 13, 18, 25, 1778, January 27, October 31, 1779, Solomon Southwick to John Sullivan, November 29, 1778, Jeremiah Wadsworth Papers, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Connecticut; *American Journal*, September 23, 1779.

[52]Edna L. Jacobson, "Southwick, Solomon," *Dictionary of American Biography*, 10 vols., (New York, 1927-1936), IX (pt. 1), 413-414.

[53]Alan Kulikoff, "The Progress of Inequality in Revolutionary Boston," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, XXVIII (1971), 376, 384-385, 389-390, 409-410.

[54]Sidney I. Pomerantz, "The Patriot Newspaper and the American Revolution," in Richard B. Morris, ed., *The Era of the American Revolution*, (New York, 1965 [orig. pub. 1939]), 330-331; Kidder, "Daniel Fowle," 102; Meder, "Timothy Green III," 115-116, 125; *Boston Town Records*, XIV, 293-294, XVI, 34-35, 49, 69, 82, 107, 130, 150, 158, 167, 289, XVIII, 9, 243, 275, 277, 296, XV, 6, 36, 49, XVI, 7, 36-37, 46, 47, 88, 89, 90, 99-100, 118, 123, 184, 185, 228, 262, XXXI, 15, 210, 247, 305, XXXV, 117, 119-120, 139-40, 167, 197, 211-214, 232, 251-252, 265-266, 285, 311, 326, 332, 334, 339, XXXVII, 7, 24, 30, 55, 66, 70, 74, 86, 93, 98, 110-111, 113-114, 115-117, 127, 128, 135, 144, 160-161, 167, 172, 174, 176, 199, 223, 254, 275; *New Hampshire Gazette*, May 4, 1779, April 17, 1784, April 2, 1788; Payments for Serving as Coronor, October 1795, April 1796, John Mycall Letters, Essex Institute, Salem, Massachusetts.

[55]Meder, 115-116, 125; *American Mercury*, April 4, 1785.

[56]Meder, 115-116, 125.

[57]*Connecticut Journal*, February 18, 1784; *Connecticut Gazette*, March 19, 1784; *New Haven Gazette*, June 3, 1784, June 9, 1785, June 8, 1786, June 7, 1787, June 5, 1788.

[58]John Hancock to Isaiah Thomas, December 14, 1788, Isaiah Thomas Papers, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts.

[59]Rutland, 10,11; Bernard A. Weisberger, *The American Newspapermen* (Chicago, 1961), 9-10; John Bixler Hench, "The Newspaper in a Republic: Boston's *Centinel* and *Chronicle*, 1784-1801," (Ph. D. dissertation, Clark University, 1979), 30.

[60]George Hough to Simeon Baldwin, April 8, 1781, Baldwin Family Papers, Sterling Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.

[61]*Boston Gazette*, August 29, 1785; *Independent Chronicle*, September 1, 1785.

[62]*New Hampshire Gazette*, June 16, 1787; *Newport Mercury*, June 25, 1787; *Vermont Gazette*, July 23, 1787.

[63]Hamilton, 211, Lawrence C. Wroth, *The Colonial Printer* (Portland, Maine, 1938), 177; Stephen Botein, "Printers and the American Revolution," in Bernard Bailyn and John B. Hench, eds., *The Press and the American Revolution*, (Worcester, Mass., 1980), 19, 45; Main, 215-219; Pomerantz, 33-331; Kidder, 165. Norman H. Dawes, in studying the use of honorary titles in colonial New England, concluded that the title of Esquire had lost all the specific political significance it once held by the late seventeenth century, but that it continued to indicate a certain amount of social standing in the community. Norman H. Dawes, "Titles as Symbols of Prestige in Seventeenth-Century New England," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, VI (1949), 92.

[64]Rollo G. Silver, "Abstracts From the Wills and Estates of Boston Printers, 1800-1825," *Studies in Bibliography*, VII (1955), 212-218.

[65]Estate Inventories of John Gill, William Warden, John Nourse, Ezekiel Russell, Thomas Adams, John Fleet, John W. Folsom, Thomas B. Wait, Benjamin Russell, Files # 18510, 18652, 19431, 20613, 21043, 22599, 27497, 29214, 34226, copies in Book Trades Collection, American Antiquarian Socie-

ty, Worcester, Massachusetts; Estate Inventories of Thomas Green, Samuel Green, New Haven Records, John Trumbill, Norwich Probate Records, Barzillai Hudson, Roger Storrs, Ebenezer Watson, Hartford Probate Records, Connecticut State Library, Hartford, Connecticut; Estate Inventory of Benjamin Edes, Junior, Boston Printers Collection, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Massachusetts; Estate Inventory of Isaiah Thomas, copy in the Isaiah Thomas Papers, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts; original at the Worcester County Probate Court, Worcester, Massachusetts.

[66]Taxes of Timothy Green, 1787-1790, New London, Connecticut, Tax Lists, 1787-1790.

[67]Tax Lists for 1778 and 1783, Worcester, Massachusetts Collection, 1686-1801.

[68]Federal Taxes of Isaiah Thomas for 1815, Worcester County, Massachusetts Collection; Isaiah Thomas Letterbook Entry for February 1, 1822, Isaiah Thomas Papers; American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts.

[69]Kulikoff, 385-387.

Library Subscription Form

American Journalism
School of Communication
P.O. Box 1482
University of Alabama
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

Please enter our subscription for_____years of *American Journalism.*

_____Within territorial United States. Payment of $15.00 per year is enclosed.

_____ Outside United States by surface mail. Payment of $20.00 per year is enclosed.

_____ Outside United States by air mail. Payment of $25.00 per year is enclosed.

_____ Please bill us.

Address _____

Institution _____

City, State, Zip _____

Country _____

A limited number of back issues (Vol. I, No. 2; Vol. II, No. 1 and 2; Vol. III, No. 3; and Vol. IV, No. 1 and 2) are available and may be ordered by writing *American Journalism* in the School of Communication at the University of Alabama. Please include payment of $4.00 per copy (includes $1.00 postage and handling) for orders within the United States. Surface mail orders from outside the U.S.A. should include $5.00 per issue; air mail orders from outside the U.S.A. should include $6.00 per issue.

For Volumes I and II, *American Journalism* was published twice yearly. Publication frequency became quarterly with Volume III.

American Journalism Historians Association

President: Joseph P. McKerns, *Southern Illinois*
Vice-President: Thomas Connery, *St. Thomas*
Secretary: Don Avery, *Southern Mississippi*
Editor, *American Journalism*: Wm. David Sloan, *Alabama*

Board of Directors:

John Pauly, *Tulsa*
Maurine Beasley, *Maryland*
Richard Scheidenhelm, *Attorney-at-law*
Charles Marler, *Abilene (Tex.) Christian*
Sharon Bass, *Kansas*
Alf Pratte, *Brigham Young*
Leonard Teel, *Georgia State*
J. Snorgrass, *Florida A&M*
James D. Startt, *Valparaiso*

American Journalism
Department of Journalism
School of Communication
P.O. Box 1482
University of Alabama
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

Non-profit organization
U.S. postage paid
The University of Alabama
Permit No. 16

PER
PN
4700
.A39

AMERICAN JOURNALISM

The publication of the
American Journalism Historians Association

BYU Library S

OCT 2 8 2005

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE ASSOCIATION

VOLUME IV (1987), NUMBER 3

AMERICAN JOURNALISM solicits manuscripts throughout the year. Articles are "blind" judged by three readers chosen from the Editorial Board of *American Journalism* for their expertise in the particular subject matter of the articles. On matters of documentation and style, *American Journalism* follows the *MLA Handbook*. Authors are asked to do the same. Four copies of a manuscript should be mailed to the following address:

Wm. David Sloan
Editor, *American Journalism*
School of Communication
P.O.Box 1482
University of Alabama
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

If the author wishes to have the manuscript returned, he or she should include a self-addressed manila envelope with adequate postage.

Inquiries on all matters should be directed to *American Journalism*'s editorial and business offices in the School of Communication at the University of Alabama.

Copyright 1987, American Journalism Historians Association

AMERICAN JOURNALISM

The publication of the
American Journalism Historians Association

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE ASSOCIATION

VOLUME IV (1987) NUMBER 3

AMERICAN JOURNALISM

EDITOR: Wm. David Sloan, *Alabama*
ASSOCIATE EDITORS: Gary Whitby, *Southern Illinois,*
and James D. Startt, *Valparaiso*
ASSISTANT EDITOR: Kelly Saxton, *Alabama*
BOOK REVIEW EDITOR: Douglas Birkhead, *Utah*
GRAPHICS AND DESIGN EDITOR: Sharon M.W. Bass, *Kansas*

EDITORIAL BOARD

Dave Anderson, *Northern Colorado*; Douglas A. Anderson, *Arizona State*; Edd Applegate, *Middle Tennessee State;* Donald Avery, *Southern Mississippi*; Warren E. Barnard, *Indiana State*; Ralph D. Barney, *Brigham Young;* Maurine Beasley, *Maryland;* John Behrens, *Utica of Syracuse*; Elaine Prostak Berland; Margaret A. Blanchard, *North Carolina;* Roy E. Blackwood, *Bemidji State;* James Bow; Patricia Bradley, *Temple;* John C. Bromley, *Northern Colorado*; James A. Brown, *Alabama;* Pamela A. Brown, *Rider;* Michael Buchholz, *Texas A&M*; Lucy Shelton Caswell, *Ohio State;* Ed Caudill, *Tennessee;* Linda Cobb-Reiley, *Denver*; Earl L. Conn, *Ball State;* Alfred Comebise, *Northern Colorado*; Harold Davis, *Georgia State;* John DeMott, *Memphis State*; Wallace B. Eberhard, *Georgia;* Ralph Engleman, *Long Island*; Donald Fishman, *Boston College*; Robert S. Fortner, *George Washington*; David M. Guerra, *Arkansas-Little Rock*; Jake Highton, *Nevada-Reno*; Willaim Huntzicker; Ernest C. Hynds, *Georgia*; Phillip Jeter, *Florida A&M*; Myron K. Jordan, *Washington*; Arthur J. Kaul, *Southern Mississippi*; Samuel V. Kennedy III, *Syracuse*; Sidney Kobre; Peggy Jean Kreshel, *Georgia;* Frank Krompak, *Toledo*; Philip J. Lane, *California State, Fresno*; Richard Lentz, *Arizona State*; Charles H. Marler, *Abilene (Tex.) Christian*; Claudia Martino, *Wichita State*; Zena Beth McGlashan, *North Dakota*; *Florida;* Joseph P. McKems, *Southern Illinois*; William McReynolds, *Colorado-Boulder*; William Ray Mofield, *Murray State*; Roy L. Moore, *Kentucky*; Patricia A. Muller; *Wisconsin-La Crosse;* Sharon M. Murphy, *Marquette*; Michael Murray, *Missouri-St. Louis*; Jack A. Nelson, *Brigham Young*; Richard Alan Nelson, *Houston;* Edward A. Nickerson, *Delaware*; Marvin Olasky, *Texas*; John Pauly, *Tulsa*; Steven P. Phipps, *Indiana;* Stephen Ponder, *Oregon*; Alf Pratte, *Brigham Young*; Barbara Straus Reed, *Rutgers*; Sam G. Riley, *Virginia Tech*; Nancy L. Roberts, *Minnesota*; Bruce Roche, *Alabama*; Richard Scheidenhelm; Thomas A. Schwartz, *Ohio State*; Arthur Seeger,*Wisconsin-Milwaukee*; Michael D. Sherer, *Nebraska-Omaha*; Kim Smith, *Bowling Geen State*; MaryAnn Yodelis Smith; *Minnesota;* Zoe Smith, *Marquette*; J. William Snorgrass, *Florida A&M*; Robert Spellman, *Southern Illinois*; Harlan Stensaas, *Mercer*; Ralph J. Turner, *Marshall*; Thomas W. Volek; *Minnesota*

AMERICAN JOURNALISM (ISSN 0882-1127) Editorial and Business Offices: School of Communication, P.O. Box 1482, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487.

AMERICAN
JOURNALISM

Volume IV (1987) Number 3

123
The Image of Journalism in American Poetry
By Howard Good

133
When World Views Collide:
Journalists and the Great Monkey Trial
By Marvin N. Olasky

147
Presidential Health Reporting:
The Eisenhower Watershed
By Myron K. Jordan

159
Book Reviews

The Image of Journalism in American Poetry

By Howard Good

Distinguished American poets of the past century and a half have portrayed journalism either ambivalently or negatively. Their view of the press, particularly of the mass-circulation newspaper and television, has been anything but unbiased. As their voices have been increasingly drowned out by shrill headlines and fast-talking newscasters, and as they have felt their cultural authority eroding, they have grown increasingly distraught and resentful. Poetry and journalism have seemed to most of them to occupy opposite ends of the spectrum, and if poetry were the inner temple of literature, the sanctum sanctorum, then journalism was the red-light district.

This study analyzes American poems about popular journalism published from the 1840s to the 1980s. The poems were selected partly because of the critical reputations of their authors and partly because they follow a fairly straight evolutionary path.[1] Another historian might have chosen other poems. Certainly others on the subject exist, some of which sing the praises of the press and its practitioners. A number appeared in the trade magazine *The Journalist* in the last decade of the nineteenth and the first decade of the twentieth centuries: for example, A.E. Jessop's "Who Makes the Paper?" (1891), the anonymous "The Editor" (1902), and L.F. Burton's "A Night With the City Editor" (1904). But these were poems by unknown or little-known writers; and, in any case, they are peripheral to the central concern here, which is to examine the wounds the explosive rise of the mass media inflicted on the poetic imagination, the traumas and scars that speak with dark eloquence of the impact of a powerful new order of journalism.

It is historically important to recollect the extreme things serious poets have had to say about the press. Their poems are a sort of barometer of the mounting anxiety that yellow journals, tabloids, and TV -- the most sensational of the media -- aroused among the educated classes. The poets wanted desperately to stem the advance of what they saw as the barbarity of journalism and the corruption of cultural values. One can read the poems as a shadow history of the press, written not in the dry, factual style of the monographist, but in dread and despair.

HOWARD GOOD (Ph.D., Michigan) is an associate professor of journalism at the State University of New York at New Paltz. He is the author of *Acquainted With the Night: The Image of Journalists in American Fiction, 1890 - 1930* (Scarecrow Press, 1986).

The gulf between poetry and journalism didn't always yawn so wide. Poetry was a staple of the colonial weekly, and the versifiers wrote on such inspiring topics as the visits of dignitaries and the fall in paper currency. In the 1790s, with the Federalists and Republicans contesting for control of the central government, political parties supported the leading newspapers, and scholars and wits edited them. Philip Freneau, picked by Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson to edit his party's sheet, the *National Gazette*, was foremost a poet.

Newspapers continued regularly to publish poetry well into the nineteenth century. The New York *Sun* often devoted a column of its editorial page to what it called, more wishfully than accurately, "Poems Worth Reading." Charles Dana, owner-editor of the *Sun* from 1868 to 1897, was also editor of the best-selling *Household Book of Poetry*.[2]

Production departments and city rooms were once the rough equivalent of the writers' workshops that now abound at colleges and universities. Walt Whitman began his literary education as a printer's devil on the Long Island *Patriot* in 1831 when he was twelve. Standing at the typecase, laboriously setting stories by hand, he was in intimate and vital contact with language. Whitman later worked as a reporter and editor on so many papers -- *The Tatler, Sunday Times, Statesman, Plebian, Daily Eagle, Crescent, Democrat, New Mirror* -- that their names blurred in his memory.[3] William Cullen Bryant, an old friend of Whitman's who turned distant after he read *Leaves of Grass*, edited the New York *Evening Post* for a half a century in addition to writing some of the most famous poems of his day. Stephen Crane was a newspaperman and poet, and there were others.

Industrialization ended the liaison between poetry and journalism. "Is the *Iliad* possible," Karl Marx rhetorically asked, "when the printing press, and even printing exist? Is it not inevitable that with the emergence of the press, the singing and the telling and the muse cease; that is, the conditions necessary for epic poetry disappear?"[4] As the press developed, it both ruled out and insisted upon certain kinds of content and a certain kind of audience.[5] The last quarter of the nineteenth century witnessed the mechanization, standardization, and vulgarization of American culture. Journalism not only recorded the change but also participated in it.[6] Taking advantage of inventions ranging from the Linotype to the folding machine, cheaply priced yellow journals arose. They found an eager audience among the semiliterate immigrants and factory workers that the older, conservative six-cent papers had ignored. In circulations, number of pages per issue, and advertising volume, city dailies grew to undreamed-of sizes, as did their costs and revenues.

Yellow journalism amazed and alarmed cultural custodians, who feared it signaled the imminent collapse of Christian civilization. Editorial writers and platform speakers condemned the yellow journals for playing up violence and scandal, and some libraries and gentleman's clubs banned them. But their circulations kept climbing. "Ivrybody is inthrested in what ivrybody else is doin's that's

wrong," Finley Peter Dunne's Irish barkeeper, "Mr. Dooley," observed. "That's what makes th' newspapers." And he added: "A newspaper is to intertain, not to teach a moral lesson."[7]

It was also to make money. The spiraling costs of reporting, labor, machinery, and transportation drove papers to hunt constantly for new readers. In 1897 Lincoln Steffens wrote, "The magnitude of the financial operations of the newspaper is turning journalism upside down."[8] The era of personal journalism, of the editor-publisher who boldly stamped his character on his paper, was fading. Editors were hired men. They put into their papers only so much of their conscience and ideals as comported with profitability and office policy.[9] Edwin L. Shuman noted in 1903 that "If a publisher sees that a sensational style sells the most papers, he is strongly tempted to give the public 'a yellow journal,' just as a merchant gives his customers calico if they want it instead of silk."[10] Journalism was no longer a career or forum for high-minded poets and essayists. "More and more," Edward Alsworth Ross said in 1910, "the owner of the big city daily is a business man who finds it hard to see why he should run property on different lines from the hotel proprietor, the vaudeville manager, or the owner of an amusement park."[11]

When journalism grew into a major business and went after a mass audience with snappy stories and big, black headlines, it drifted beyond the pale of literary respectability. Nearly all of the poems analyzed in the following pages imply that journalism and poetry are different ways of knowing and that a collision between their competing visions of reality is inevitable. Most depict journalism as distracting and deadening. Some fault it for turning human suffering into hot copy, others for erasing memory by focusing relentlessly on the present. Often the poems urge a return to a simpler, more natural world and are themselves attempts to get back to that world, a world of clean proportions hidden beneath the darkness that fills the news.

Snuffing the Powder of Monstrous News

In the first series of *The Biglow Papers*, James Russell Lowell, abolitionist, poet, essayist, and Boston Brahmin, set down in verse the flaws of the nineteenth-century press. The series, which originally appeared in the Boston *Courier* and the *National Anti-Slavery Standard* from 1846 to 1848, satirized the South and the causes of the war between the United States and Mexico.[12] Number VI of the papers is "The Pious Editor's Creed," a piece of doggerel that ridiculed the type of editor who supported the Mexican War:

I du believe wutever trash
'll keep the people in blindness,--
Thet we the Mexicuns can thrash
Right inter brotherly kindness,
Thet bombshells, grape, an' powder 'n' ball

Air good-will's strongest magnets,
Thet peace, to make it stick at all,
Must be druv in with bagnets.[13]

The "pious" editor hadn't the dimmest understanding of his calling and its immense responsibility. He delighted in humbug and cant and was guided solely by self-interest:

I du believe in bein' this
Or that, ez it may happen
One way or t'other hendiest is
To ketch the people nappin';
In aint princerples nor men
My preudent couse is steadied,--
I scent wich pays the best, an' then
Go into it baldheaded.[14]

Yet in a pseudo-scholarly note appended to the poem, Lowell (writing in the guise of Parson Homer Wilbur of Jaalam, Massachusetts) declared, "Wonderful, to him that has the eyes to see it rightly, is the newspaper." The arrival of the parson's weekly journal was like that of a "puppet-show, on whose stage...the tragedy, comedy, and farce of life are played in little." He tore off the brown wrapper and suddenly held in his hands the "ends of myriad invisible electric conductors, along which tremble the joys, sorrows, wrongs, triumphs, hopes, and despairs of as many men and women everywhere." And though tomorrow the front page might be a "platter for a beggar's broken victuals," it did contain for this one thrilling instant a vision "let down...from Heaven."[15]

Lowell questioned certain tendencies or practices of the press but still saw magic in the "little show box," as he described the newspaper, and its repertoire of revolutions, disasters, crimes, and speeches.[16] Like most nineteenth-century poets, he was more ambivalent than cynical about journalism. He was dazzled by the speed and reach of the infant telegraph (those "myriad invisible electric conductors") even while he regretted that it granted to ignorant editors unprecedented influence over public opinion.

The entwined promise and threat of the press were the focus of Walt Whitman's "A Font of Type" (1888). Whitman drew on his youth at the typecase to invoke the contradictory powers of the printed word to liberate, slay, whore, or heal:

This latent mine -- these unlaunch'd voices
--passionate powers,
Wrath, argument, or praise, or comic leer,
or prayer devout,
(Not nonpareil, brevier, bourgeois,

long primer merely,)
These ocean waves arousable to fury and to death,
Or sooth's to ease and sheeny sun and sleep,
Within the pallid slivers slumbering.[17]

"Nonpareil," "brevier," "bourgeois," and "long primer" are the names of type faces. Whitman chose them partly for their sound and partly for their symbolic overtones. For example, brevier was so called from its use in printing breviaries, and here represented the sacredness of language, the holy ghost of creativity. Bourgeois was its antithesis, suggesting writings that were philistine and commercial. The capacity of print to uplift existed side by side with its capacity to corrupt. To Whitman, the double life that words lead was less a cause for concern than for celebration. It made possible not only newspapers but also poetry.

If this versatility filled Whitman with excitement, it filled Stephen Crane with misgivings. Crane, who had failed at journalism in New York before the publication of *The Red Badge of Courage* in 1895, but who was a successful war correspondent after the novel came out, expressed his reservations so forcefully in "A newspaper is a collection" (1899) that he alienated reporter acquaintances.[18] The poem lambasted the yellow press of the 1880s and 1890s, which, to the chagrin of many thoughtful people, had intensified the rowdyism and luridness of the penny papers of the 1830s. Crane seems to have been particularly provoked by the hypocrisy of the sensational journals in trying to pass off stories of sex, blood, and money as morally instructive. The oxymora that gave his poem its peculiar tone ("A newspaper is a court/Where every one is kindly and unfairly tried/by a squalor of honest men") implied that journalism wasn't quite the friend of truth or justice or the workingman that it professed to be.[19]

But Crane blamed emotion-starved readers (families that "cuddle the joys of fireside/When spurred by tale of dire lone agony") at least as much as profit-hungry publishers for sensationalism. By delving into the "laboring classes" for circulation and by carrying out noisy crusades, the yellow press had aroused fears of mobocracy. Crane vented his distrust of the hoi polloi ("a million merciful and sneering men") in savage lines such as "A newspaper is a market/Where wisdom sells its freedom/And melons are crowned by the crowd."[20]

One poem from early in this century, T.S. Eliot's "The Boston Evening Transcript" (1915), subjected a respectable newspaper to the sort of scorn usually reserved for scandal sheets. The *Evening Transcript* was the bible of Beacon Hill. Its politics were conservative, its social pages extensive, and its financial pages complete. For its small subscriptions list, it was a reassuring reminder of class superiority, but for Eliot, it personified an almost congenital narrow-mindedness. The point was underlined by his summoning from the shadows the ghost of La Rochefoucauld, whose *The Maxims* dissected another closed society, the court of Louis XIV:

When evening quickens faintly in the street,
Wakening the appetites of life in some
And to others bringing the *Boston Evening Transcript*,
I mount the steps and ring the bell, turning
Wearily, as one would turn to nod goodbye to
Rochefoucauld,
If the street were time and he at the end of the street,
And I say, "Cousin Harriet, here is the *Boston*
Evening Transcript."[21]

The pace of the poem is languid. Words like "faintly" and "wearily" added to the picture of an aristocracy in the final stages of decay. The readers of the genteel *Evening Transcript* appeared so thoroughly insulated from the real world as to be entombed. They were trapped in an evolutionary dead end and about to be swamped by the burgeoning mass culture that Crane had glimpsed with such uneasiness.

Eliot's tone was refined, like the paper he was caricaturing. More typical of twentieth-century poetry about the press was the pure vitriol of Edgar Lee Masters' "Editor Whedon" in *Spoon River Anthology* (1915). For eight years, Masters was a partner of the celebrated criminal lawyer and defender of lost causes Clarence Darrow. He also was a part of the Chicago Literary Renaissance. Other key figures in the renaissance, which lasted from the mid-1910s to the early 1920s and helped introduce, or reintroduce, the vernacular to American literature, included Carl Sandburg and Ben Hecht.[22] Both had backgrounds in journalism, and their reporting may have afforded them their first inklings of the extraordinary uses to which ordinary language could be put. Given Masters' circumstances and cohorts, there is a distinct, and ironic, possibility that the terse phrasing of the criticisms he flung at the press was shaped to some unconscious extent by newspaper writing.

The conscious inspiration for the poems in *Spoon River* was classical Greek epitaphs. With the anguished voice of the eternally damned, Whedon spoke from beyond the grave about his career as a small-town editor. Death had dissolved his illusions, and he now saw with terrifying clarity that he had gloried "...in demoniac power, ditching civilization,/As a paranoic boy puts a log on the track/and derails the express train." He had, he said, exploited his trusted position in the community "To scratch dirt over scandal for money,/And exhume it to the winds for revenge,/Or to sell papers...."[23] His confession was a strangled echo of Lowell's "The Pious Editor's Creed," strangled because the follies and flaws of the press that Lowell had treated with good-humored satire assumed here a dark, tragic cast. It was as if the press were growing too large and powerful -- daily circulation rose from 28 million in 1914 to 36 million in 1926 -- to be a laughing matter anymore.[24]

Masters returned to the same theme in "Jay Hawkins" in *The New Spoon River* (1924), but this time from the perspective of the newspaper reader. The poem

expressed the alarm felt in some quarters at the gutter journalism of the tabloids, which were then approaching the height of competitive frenzy, each trying to outshout the others about sex and crime. It opened with the narrator exclaiming: "Jay walking! Reading the head lines! Struck down/by a fliver and killed while reading/About the man-girl slayer!"[25] That the automobile and the tabloid were connected in Masters' mind is telling. The tabloid, with its photographs of corpses and scantily clad women, reflected the currents sweeping through American life after World War I. Prosperity, Prohibition, the assembly line, feminism, and the popularization of Freudian psychology washed away traditional mores. The automobile also played a role in the overthrow of old taboos, for it allowed young people to escape the immediate supervision of their parents and brought the sinful delights of the city within easier reach of the countryside.

In the poem, the tabloid was a convenient symbol for the huge, pinwheeling forces hastening moral rot. Hawkins represented a public "Cursed with the newspaper habit:/ Snuffing the powder of monstrous news" out of frustration and boredom with their own lives. But like an addiction to heroin or cocaine, the habit required ever-increasing dosages for its satisfaction, and its consequences were catastrophic, either burnout or death. Masters dreamed of a journalism less obsessed with stories of "Lying, stealing, lusting, wasting...." Through his repentant narrator, he asked, as thousands of newspaper readers have asked since, "...if life is full of beauty,/And full of nobility and creating,/Why don't they write about it?"[26]

Unknown Voices and Rumors of Crowds

The second half of the twentieth century has seen poets relinquish the hope that popular journalism will ever change its sensational ways. No doubt the advent of television, with its speed-of-light technology, immense nightly audience (there are more television sets in the United States than bathtubs or toilets), and arresting film footage, has contributed to their pessimism.[27] They feel threatened by what Christopher Lasch called the "propaganda of death and destruction emanating ceaselessly from the mass media," the swirling kaleidoscopic images of war and famine and earthquake.[28] "I try desperately to sleep, to dream, to vomit --/anything to shut out the hissing sound/of limbs and heads as they bob to the surface/from the fathomless layers of print," William Witherup wrote in his Vietnam era poem "Depression."[29] Witherup struck the essential note of dread that echoes through contemporary poetry about the press. The poets seem to live in fear of the unconscious invasion of their minds by "mediaspeak." They worry that someday they will search their imaginations for a fresh phrase or image, and find only the detritus of the mass media.

Modern poets have struggled to transcend the claustrophobic confines of the media-made environment. William Stafford, in "Evening News" (1970), described television as a "great window," but not one that looks out and clearly reveals the passing scene. Television "...puts forth its own scene,/the whole

world/alive in glass." Those who mistake the televised fragments of experience for reality are strangely diminished, "...become unknown/voices and rumors of crowds." Stafford's solution to the discontinuities of the mass media was a romantic worship of the generative spirit that glows in nature, a spirit that was there before the news was invented and that will be there still when the news has been forgotten. He prayed "...birds,/wind, unscheduled grass,/that they please help to make/everything go deep again."[30]

In "The Morning's News" (1970), Wendell Berry also turned to the unbroken rhythms of nature for solace. Initially Berry, like Witherup in "Depression," was overwhelmed by the clamor of the press:

> The morning's news drives sleep out of the head
> at night. Uselessness and horror hold the eyes
> open to the dark....[31]

But unlike Witherup, Berry escaped the phantasmagoria of violence and bloodshed by submitting to "...the ancient wisdom/of tribesman and peasant, who understood they labored on earth only to lie down in it/in peace, and were content." When he realized that "The earth is news," he was reborn a natural man at home among the creatures.[32]

Stephen Crane, disillusioned with the yellow journalism of the 1890s, had looked back longingly in his newspaper poem to "remote ages" that were undisturbed by scareheads and scoops.[33] As the tempo of the news has accelerated throughout the twentieth century, nostalgia for a vanished golden world has deepened in poetry about the press. Seeking refuge from the media onslaught, Berry, Stafford, and other contemporary poets have conjured a mythical garden, nature's dream kingdom. Their ultimate defense against the terrors and distractions of the mass media is a heart faithful to the mystery in a cloud.

Conclusion

Long before our own time, Lowell, Crane, and Masters voiced serious misgivings about the press. They considered the popular journalism of their eras degenerate and self-serving, a potentially dangerous crack in the social foundations. More recently, Philip Levine asked in his poem "Sources" (1981), "What do we have today?" and promptly answered, "A morning newspaper full of lies."[34]

A few poets did perceive something in journalism beyond crass commercialism or mindless diversion. Whitman, for example, rejoiced in the range of magical transformations of which print was capable, all the way from the sensational headline to the soulful hymn. But for a century and a half, the predominant attitude of poets toward the press has been a bitter mixture of condescension and criticism. It has been taken more or less for fact that poetry is the pinnacle of literary art, and journalism the sprawling shantytown at the foot of the mountain.

The portrayal of journalism in American poetry represents what some of our most thoughtful and talented writers have concluded about the press -- and they

generally have concluded the worst. They have found the mass media guilty of extinguishing imagination and memory, reason and peace. In lines more direful than beautiful, the poets have warned people to throw down their newspapers and turn off their TVs and to discover the truth for themselves, and soon, before there are no words left to tell it.

NOTES

[1]My analysis is of poems I've found through personal reading and various editions of *Granger's Index to Poetry* (New York: Columbia University Press). For space and other reasons my discussion is necessarily limited to a small number of poems. Those I do examine, are, in my judgment, the most representative or interesting. I have included an Appendix listing the seventeen poems that formed the basis for my interpretation.

[2]Edward P. Mitchell, "Mr. Dana of "The Sun," *McClure's Magazine*, October 1894, p. 379.

[3]Walt Whitman, *Specimen Days* (Philadelphia, 1882; rpt. Boston, 1971), p. 118; Justin Kaplan, *Walt Whitman: A Life* (New York, 1980), pp. 74-74, 104.

[4]Quoted in Neil Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business* (New York, 1985), p. 42-43.

[5]*Ibid.*, p. 43.

[6]Henry Steele Commager, *The American Mind* (New Haven, 1950), pp. 67, 69.

[7]Finley Peter Dunne, *Observations by Mr. Dooley* (New York, 1902), pp. 243-44.

[8]Quoted in Frank Luther Mott, *American Journalism*, 3rd ed. (New York, 1962), p. 547.

[9]Edward Alsworth Ross, "The Suppression of Important News," in *The Profession of Journalism*, ed. Willard Grosvenor Bleyer (Boston, 1918), p. 81.

[10]Edwin L. Shuman, *Practical Journalism* (New York, 1903), p. 16.

[11]Ross, p. 81.

[12]Richard Croom Beatty, *James Russell Lowell* (Nashville, Vanderbilt, 1942; rpt. n.p.: Archon Books, 1969), p. 75.

[13]James Russell Lowell, *The Biglow Papers*, with a Prefatory Note by Ernest Rhys (London, n.d.), p. 94.

[14]*Ibid.*, p. 93.

[15]*Ibid.*, p. 95-96.

[16]*Ibid.*, p. 95.

[17]Walt Whitman, "A Font of Type," in *Whitman*, ed. Leslie A. Fiedler (New York, 1959), p. 155.

[18]Thomas Beer, *Stephen Crane* (New York, 1923), p. 222.

[19]Stephen Crane, "A newspaper is a collection," in *Poems of Stephen Crane*, ed. Gerald M. McDonald (New York, 1964), p. 39.

[20]*Ibid.*

[21]T.S. Eliot, "The Boston Evening Transcript," in *Collected Poems, 1910-1962* (New York, 1963), p. 20.

[22]Mark Van Doren, "Introduction," in *Harvest Poems* by Carl Sandburg (New York, 1960), pp. 5-10; Stanley J. Kunitz and Howard Haycraft, eds., *Twentieth Century Authors* (New York, 1942), pp. 631-32.

[23]Edgar Lee Masters, "Editor Whedon," in *Spoon River Anthology* (New York, 1931), p. 189.

[24]Frederick Lewis Allen, *Only Yesterday* (New York, 1931), p. 189.

[25]Edgar Lee Masters, "Jay Hawkins," in *The New Spoon River* (New York, 1924), p. 36.

[26]*Ibid.*

[27]Edwin Diamond, *The Tin Kazoo:*

Television, Politics, and the News (Cambridge, Mass., 1975), p. 13.

[28]Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations* (New York, 1979), p. 130.

[29]William Witherup, "Depression," in *Now Voices: The Poetry of the Present*, ed. Angelo Carli and Theodore Kilman (New York, 1977), p. 215.

[30]William Stafford, "Evening News," in *Allegiances* (New York, 1970), p. 58.

[31]Wendell Berry, "The Morning's News," in *Farming: A Hand Book* (New York, 1970), p. 19.

[32]*Ibid.*, p. 20.

[33]Crane, p. 39.

[34]Philip Levine, "Sources," in *One for the Rose* (New York, 1981), p. 68.

APPENDIX

Berry, Wendell. "The Morning's News." In *Farming: A Hand Book.* New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1970, pp. 19-20.

Crane, Stephen. "A newspaper is a collection." In *Poems of Stephen Crane.* Gerald D. McDonald, editor. New York: Crowell, 1964, p. 39.

Eliot, T.S. "The Boston Evening Transcript." In *Collected Poems, 1910-1962.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1963, p. 20.

Hall, Donald. "The Brain Cells." In *The Town of Hill.* Boston: Godine, 1975, pp. 35-36.

Keith, Joseph Joel. "Sunday Edition." In *Fire and Sleet and Candlelight.* August Derleth, editor. Sauk City, Wis.: Arkham, 1961, p. 117.

Levine, Philip. "Sources." In *One for the Rose.* New York: Atheneum, 1981, pp. 67-68.

Lowell, John Russell. "The Pious Editor's Creed." In *The Biglow Papers.* With a Prefatory Note by Ernest Rhys. London: Walter Scott, n.d., pp. 89-96.

Masters, Edgar Lee. "Editor Whedon." In *Spoon River Anthology.* New York: MacMillan, 1945, p. 131.

_____. "Jay Hawkins." In *The New Spoon River.* New York: Boni and Liveright, 1924, p. 36.

Miles, Josephine. "Herald." In *Collected Poems, 1930-83.* Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1983, p. 11.

Ortiz, Simon. "Ten O'Clock News." In *Voices from Wah'Kon-Tah: Contemporary Poetry of Native Americans.* Robert K. Dodge and Joseph B. McCullough, editors. New York: International, 1974, p. 79.

Stafford, William. "Evening News." In *Allegiances.* New York: Harper & Row, 1970, p. 58.

_____. "We Interrupt to Bring You." In *A Glass Face in the Rain.* New York: Harper & Row, 1982, p. 74.

Warman, Cy. "Doing Railroads for *The Rocky Mountain News.*" In *Poems of the Old West.* Levette J. Davidson, editor. Denver: Univ. of Denver Press, 1951, pp. 173-75.

Whitman, Walt. "A Font of Type." In *Whitman.* Leslie A. Fiedler, editor. New York: Laurel Poetry Series-Dell, 1959, p. 155.

Wilbur, Richard. "After the Last Bulletins." In *Poems 1943-1956.* London: Faber and Faber, 1956, pp. 99-100.

Witherup, William. "Depression." In *Now Voices: The Poetry of the Present.* Angelo Carli and Theodore Kilman, editors. New York: Scribner's 1971, p. 215.

When World Views Collide: Journalists and the Great Monkey Trial

By Marvin N. Olasky

Walter Lippmann wrote in 1921 about "the pictures in our head," the phenomena we want to see. "For the most part," he wrote, "we do not see first, then define; we define first and then see."[1] Lippmann gave one jocular example of how a traveler's expectations dictate the story he will tell upon return:

> If he carried chiefly his appetite, a zeal for tiled bathrooms, a conviction that the Pullman car is the acme of human comfort, and a belief that it is proper to tip waiters, taxicab drivers, and barbers, but under no circumstances station agents and ushers, then his Odyssey will be replete with good meals and bad meals, bathing adventures, compartment-train escapades, and voracious demands for money.[2]

Only four years after Lippmann wrote that, the Scopes "monkey" trial provided a serious example of the importance of presuppositions among journalists. Reporters from major city newspapers who journeyed to Dayton, Tennessee, carried with them an antipathy toward fundamentalist Christianity. Their resultant treatment of Dayton, the Scopes trial participants, and the important issues involved in the trial, threw more light on their biases than on the situation that existed in reality.

How did trial newspaper reports compare with trial records? How did reports from those who came to Dayton like anthropologists from afar compare with those from observers more familiar with local mores? How did non-journalistic observers remember the events? The answers to those questions are provided by trial documents and the daily June and July, 1925, pre-trial, trial, and post-trial coverage in eight newspapers: New York *Times*, New York *American*, Chicago *Tribune*, Washington *Post*, Baltimore *Sun*, Los Angeles *Times*, *Arkansas Gazette*, and Atlanta *Constitution*.

A Battle of Religions

By the 1920s most academic leaders accepted the theory of evolution as scien-

MARVIN N. OLASKY (Ph.D., Michigan) is an assistant professor of journalism at the University of Texas.

tific fact. Belief in evolution provided new hope for those who no longer accepted biblical Christianity. As the New York *Times* editorialized, modern man needed "faith, even of a grain of mustard seed, in the evolution of life."[3] The *Times* quoted Bernard Shaw's statement that "The world without the conception of evolution would be a world wherein men of strong mind could only despair" -- for their only hope would be in a God to whom such modernists would not pray.[4]

Other newspapers featured more spokesmen for evolutionary beliefs. The Chicago *Tribune* gave front page space to zoologist H. J. Muller's faith concerning man that "so far he has had only a short probationary period. He is just at the beginning of a great epic adventure in the course of world evolution."[5] Belief in evolution had grown ever since Darwin had reinvigorated the age-old concept through his mid-nineteenth century writings, but World War I had given it new impetus. The great and terrible war so decimated hopes for peaceful progress of mankind that millions came to believe in one or other of two ways upward from misery: either God's grace or man's evolution.

The New York *Times*' hope was in evolution. An editorial stated:

> If man has evolved, it is inconceivable that the process should stop and leave him in his present imperfect state. Specific creation has no such promise for man....No Legislation should (or can) rob the people of their hope.[6]

But in Tennessee, legislation that threatened to "rob the people of their hope" was passed, and the *Times* feared other states might follow.

Tennessee legislators, trying to stop usage of, and teacher reliance on, pro-evolution textbooks, made it a misdemeanor for public school teachers to proclaim as truth the belief "that man has descended from a lower order of animals."[7] The legislation made a clash of world views inevitable. The battle began when one young Dayton teacher, John T. Scopes, responded to an American Civil Liberties Union plea for someone to agree to be the defendant in a test case, with the ACLU paying all legal expenses. The ACLU hired agnostic Clarence Darrow, probably the most famous lawyer of the era, to head the defense; fundamentalist William Jennings Bryan, thrice-defeated Democratic presidential candidate and former Secretary of State, became point man for the prosecution.[8]

The issue and the luminaries brought out the journalists.[9] More than 100 reporters were dispatched to the trial; they wired 165,000 words daily to their newspapers during the twelve days of extensive coverage in July, 1925. The New York *Times* itself received an average of 10,000 words per day from its writers on the scene.[10]

In theory, trial coverage was an opportunity to illuminate the theological bases on which both evolutionist and creationist superstructures were built. From books written on the issues of the case, from a few of the news reports, and from the trial transcripts itself, it is clear that there were intelligent people (and not-so-intelligent people) on both sides of the issue. For instance, even a pro-

evolution journalist at one point admitted that the man who had proposed the anti-evolutionary legislation was "a sound logician."[11] Another reporter wrote with amazement of a Tennessee mountain man who had, along with his old clothes and unpolished boots, a scholar's knowledge of Greek and the ability to make careful comparisons of New Testament translations.[12]

In practice, though, reporters described the story as one of pro-evolution intelligence vs. anti-evolution stupidity. H.L. Mencken attacked the Dayton fundamentalists (before he had set foot in the town) as "local primates," "yokels," "morons," and "half-wits."[13] He put aside his typical amusement with life to ride Paul Revere-like through the land with dire warnings about the trial:

> Let no one mistake it for comedy, farcical though it may be in all its details. It serves notice on the country that Neanderthal man is organizing in these forlorn backwaters of the land, led by a fanatic, rid of sense and devoid of conscience.[14]

Mencken summarized his view of the debate's complexity by noting, "On the one side was bigotry, ignorance, hatred, superstition, every sort of blackness that the human mind is capable of. On the other side was sense."[15]

Other journalists from the Northeast and the urban Midwest shared that view. Nunnally Johnson, who covered the trial for the Brooklyn *Eagle* and then became a noted Hollywood screenwriter, remembered years later, "For the newspapermen it was a lark on a monstrous scale.... Being admirably cultivated fellows, they were all of course evolutionists and looked down on the local fundamentalists."[16] Acid-tongued Westbrook Pegler, who covered the trial briefly, admired Mencken and imitated his coverage, but noted years later concerning the anti-evolutionists:

> They were intelligent people, including a fair proportion of college graduates. Nevertheless, the whole Blue Ridge country was ridiculed on religious grounds by an enormous claque of supercilious big town reporters.[17]

Such ridicule was not a function of politics; it underlay the politics of both liberal and conservative newspapers. The liberal New York *Times* editorialized that the anti-evolutionist position represented a "breakdown of the reasoning powers. It is seeming evidence that the human mind can go into deliquescence without falling into stark lunacy."[18] The conservative Chicago *Tribune* sneered at fundamentalists looking for "horns and forked tails and the cloven hoofs."[19] Two weeks before the trial began, the *Arkansas Gazette* could note, "These days a newspaper that does not contain a barbed thrust aimed directly or otherwise at Tennessee is fully as difficult to find as a needle in a haystack...or more to the point, a link in the chain of evolution."[20]

Nor did coverage simply reflect journalistic preference for urban civilization

over rural living conditions. When Mencken first arrived in Dayton he was so surprised that he produced his only non-acidic description of Dayton, calling it:

> a country town full of charm and even beauty....The cool houses are surrounded by pretty gardens, with cool green lawns and stately trees. The two chief streets are paved from curb to curb. The stores carry good stocks and have a metropolitan air....[T]he Evolutionists and the Anti-Evolutionists seem to be on the best of terms and it is hard in a group to distinguish one from the other.[21]

One reporter mentioned with surprise that a Dayton drug store had gleaming counters and packaged goods similar to those available on Fifth Avenue.[22]

The ridicule primarily reflected reporters' outrage at fundamentalist theology, in part because their cultures had only recently "outgrown" that theology. The New York *Times* noted at one point:

> A certain unexpectedness in the behavior and talk of the Dayton people. The unexpectedness comes from the absence in these Dayton people of any notable dissimilarity from the people elsewhere except in their belated clinging to a method of Scriptural interpretation that not long ago was more than common in both North and South.[23]

The *Times* writer in those two sentences understood that the fundamentalist beliefs were far from bizarre; in fact, it was the newer method of Scriptural interpretation that had been regarded as bizarre in Times Square as well as Tennessee only a short time before.

Presupposition and Errors in Description

When journalists actually arrived in Dayton and began daily reportage, their first job was to describe accurately the legal issues of the trial. That was more difficult than it might have seemed because some correspondents presented the trial as one involving free speech. The Chicago *Tribune*'s Kinsley wrote that the Tennessee law, if upheld, would make every work on evolution "a book of evil tidings, to be studied in secret."[24]

Kinsley's statement was nonsense: Hundreds of pro-evolution writings were on sale in Dayton. Even a drug store had a stack of materials representing all positions. John Butler, the legislator who introduced the anti-evolution bill, had a copy of Darwin's *The Origin of the Species* for his teenage children to read, and told reporters, "I am not opposed to teaching of evolution, but I don't think it ought to be taught in state-supported schools."[25]

The key issue was not free speech, but parental control over school curricula. Even in Tennessee, Christian parents already sensed exclusion of their beliefs from schools they funded. William Jennings Bryan spoke for them when he said he "never advocated teaching the Bible in public schools," but believed:

> There is no reason why school children should not hear of Bible characters as well as other characters. In other words, there is no reason why the reading of the Bible should be excluded while the reading of books about other characters in history, like Confucius, should be permitted.[26]

Tennessee legislators viewed their anti-evolution bill not as a way of putting Christian religion into the schools, but of forbidding proselytization for what they considered a trendy but unproven evolutionary faith. Tennessee Governor Austin Peay opposed the uncritical acceptance of evolutionary material "that no science has established."[27] One anti-evolutionary organization called itself the Defenders of True Science versus Speculation, contending that evolution "is a theory not yet approved by science," particularly since species-transitional fossils ("missing links") had not been found.[28] "Demonstrated truth," Bryan insisted, "has no terrors for Christianity."[29]

It would have been difficult but not impossible for journalists to explain these issues, had they the ability to go beyond the pictures in their own heads, or the willingness to do so. But, with rare exceptions, they did not. The New York *American* began one trial story with the sentence, "Tennessee today maintained its quarantine against learning."[30] The battle pitted "rock-ribbed Tennessee" against "unfettered investigation by the human mind and the liberty of opinion which the Constitution makers preached."[31] Reporters from the New York *Times* and the Chicago *Tribune* regularly attacked Christian faith and "this superheated religious atmosphere, this pathetic search for the 'eternal truth.' "[32]

Columnist Bugs Baer wrote with lively viciousness. He depicted Scopes as an imprisoned martyr, "the witch who is to be burned by Dayton."[33] (Actually, Scopes did not spend a second in jail and regularly ate dinner at the homes of Dayton Christians.) Baer described Bryan's face as "a panorama of curdled egotism."[34] The columnist predicted that a fundamentalist victory would turn "the dunce cap" into "the crown of office."[35] Baer called residents of Dayton "treewise monkeys" who "see no logic, speak no logic and hear no logic."[36] When William Jennings Bryan Jr., an attorney, arrived for the trial, Baer wrote, "Junior is bound to be a chip off the old blockhead. ...Like father, like son, and we don't like either."[37]

The Dayton jurors, who following the trial gave thoughtful accounts of the proceedings, were described in one New York headline: "INTELLIGENCE OF MOST LOWEST GRADE." It seemed that:

> All twelve are Protestant churchgoers. ...Hickory-shirted, collarless, suspendered, tanned, raw-boned men are these....The grade of intelligence as revealed by the attitudes and words of the twelve indicates to this observer that at least nine of the Scopes jurors had never used a four-syllable word in their lives until the term "evolution" was crowded into the local vocabulary.[38]

One prospective juror even had "a homemade hair cut and ears like a loving cup."[39]

Newspapers ran humorous comments about Dayton similar to today's ethnic jokes; the New York *Times*, though, worried that the situation was serious, and trumpeted of "CRANKS AND FREAKS" in a front page headline. The *Times* worried about the belief in creationism by "thousands of unregulated or ill-balanced minds,"[40] and depicted as zombies Tennesseans entering the courthouse: "All were sober-faced, tight-lipped, expressionless."[41] The Chicago *Tribune* news service sometimes criticized anti-evolutionists more subtly:

> At regular intervals loud, ringing tones from the courthouse steeple announce the hour to Dayton folk -- and announce it consistently 35 minutes ahead of central standard time. This little town, object of scorn to residents of great cities, is far from being backward in counting the hours.[42]

Presuppositions and Biased Trial Coverage

The typical major newspaper reporter's cartoon version of the Dayton issues wasted an opportunity to explain vital issues. Yet, since newspapers were (and are) event-oriented, perhaps they could not be expected to clarify theological questions. Readers, though, at least should have been able to expect accurate news coverage of the actual trial events.

The formal judicial proceedings were not the main show. The Scopes case was open-and-shut, with the ACLU desiring conviction on obvious law-breaking so that the decision could be appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court for a ruling on the Tennessee act's constitutionality. (Ironically, after Scopes' conviction, the Tennessee Supreme Court upheld the anti-evolution law but overturned the conviction on a technicality involving the imposition of a $100 fine without jury approval; the U.S. Supreme Court never heard the case.) The importance of the Dayton trial, for both prosecution and defense, lay in the chance to debate issues.

Accurate coverage of the great debates, however, was not forthcoming. Comparison of news reports on the trial's two most dramatic confrontations with other descriptive information reveals journalistic bias.

The first of the great debates pitted Bryan against Darrow's associate Dudley Malone on July 16. The court transcript shows strong and intelligent orations by both sides. Bryan, within biblical presuppositions, made a logical and coherent argument. He stressed the evolutionary theory's lack of scientific proof and emphasized its inability to answer questions about how life began, how man began, how one species actually changes into another, and so on. He pointed out the irreconcilability of Darwinian doctrines of extra-species evolution with the Biblical account of creation, original sin, and the reasons for Christ's coming. Malone, within evolutionist presuppositions, argued in a similarly cohesive way. On the face of the written record, both sides did well.

Of course, reading the written record of a speech is not the same as hearing a speech. Yet the favorable remarks of many Daytonites indicate the impact of Bryan's oratory. Even the defendant himself, John T. Scopes, said that the speech

> was well received by the audience....Every gesture and intonation of [Bryan's] voice blended so perfectly that it was almost like a symphony; and yet, the impression was that it was all extemporaneous. The longer he talked (a little more than an hour), the more complete was the control he had over the crowd.[43]

Remarks of that kind did not get into major newspapers. Instead, the typical report tracked Mencken's gibe that Bryan's speech "was a grotesque performance and downright touching in its imbecility."[44] McGeehan of the New York *Herald Tribune* wrote that Bryan "was given the floor and after exactly one hour and ten minutes he was lying upon it horizontally -- in a figurative sense."[45] (McGeehan, regularly a sportswriter, did not often get to write about figurative self-knockouts.) He used his mind-reading talents to note that "The brethren and sisters in the rear of the courtroom looked sorrowful and disappointed," and he used his awareness of body language to point out that "Mr. Bryan sat in his corner in the attitude of the defeated gladiator."[46]

Many reporters loaded their Bryan coverage with sarcastic biblical allusions: "Unleash his thunder," "make this jury the recording angels of a great victory for revealed religion," or "The sun seemed to stand still in the heavens, as for Joshua of old, and to burn with holy wrath against the invaders of this fair Eden of fundamentalism." Sometimes, sentence after sentence mixed biblical metaphors: "Dayton began to read a new book of revelations today. The wrath of Bryan fell at last. With whips of scorn, he sought to drive science from the temples of God and failed."[47]

The Chicago *Tribune*'s Kinsley, though, predicted that Malone's speech would lead to imminent victory, not in the courtroom but in the hearts and minds of fundamentalists:

> Dayton is awakening -- more especially the mass of the younger people who heard the great debate. It was evident that the leaven was working....there is on the streets and in the homes here tonight a new opinion, not universal but of formidable proportions. Bryan is great, but the truth is greater, and the truth as applied to man's origin was not locked in a book in the days of Moses.[48]

Kinsley provided no evidence of this evident awakening, but "news coverage" suggesting similar attacks on the book of Genesis became a staple of reporting from Dayton as the trial wore on.

The second major confrontation came on the trial's last day, when Bryan and

Darrow battled in a debate bannered in newspapers across the country: "BRYAN AND DARROW IN BITTER RELIGIOUS CLASH."[49]

The trial transcript shows a presuppositional debate in which both sides enunciated their views with occasional wit and frequent bitterness. If the goal of the antagonists in the Tennessee July heat was to keep their cool, both slipped, but it was Darrow who showed extreme intolerance, losing his temper to talk about "fool religion" and to call Christians "bigots and ignoramuses."[50]

Once again, the question needs to be asked: Was the oral actuality different from the written record? Not according to an anti-evolution writer on one Oklahoma paper who proclaimed, "Mr. Bryan came out more than victorious. He made a monkey out of the defense counsel and left them gasping."[51] That bias is to be expected. More useful is a report from the generally neutral (on this issue) Los Angeles *Times*, which concluded that "Bryan emerges in a better light than his rival."[52] Also useful is a report from the pro-evolution (but attuned to local culture) *Arkansas Gazette*, which reported that Bryan

> stood up before Darrow at times and defied him to do his worst....[Bryan] struck the hearts of many of those who sat in front of him. ...today's performance puts the defense of this case where Mr. Bryan has tried to maneuver it -- into the field of opposition to the Bible, among the scientific agnosticism that follows Darrow....
>
> [Bryan] set his face to the one goal -- the defense of revealed religion, as he and his followers believe it. They number millions and they will applaud him in this struggle. He will be a brave figure to them after today. He emerges as a hero.[53]

Once again, though, New York and Chicago-based reporters declared Bryan a humiliated loser. The New York *Times* called Bryan's testimony "an absurdly pathetic performance, with a famous American the chief creator and butt of a crowd's rude laughter."[54] The next day the *Times* observed, "It was a Black Monday for him [Bryan] when he exposed himself. ... It has long been known to many that he was only a voice calling from a poorly-furnished brain-room."[55] The *Herald Tribune*'s McGeehan wrote that Bryan was "losing his temper and becoming to all intents and purposes a mammal."[56]

A few observations from years later may be helpful. Pro-evolutionist L. Sprague de Camp, after reading contemporary accounts by journalists and spectators, concluded:

> The newspaper reporters may have depicted the speech as less effective than it was, because most of them were city men, hostile to the speaker. To them, the Great Commoner [Bryan] was the leader of organized ignorance, the modern Torquemada. They would not have liked his speech no matter how eloquent or stirring it was.[57]

Some predisposed reporters were so far off in their understanding of the other side's beliefs that their stories became ludicrous. For instance, one journalist wrote that "the humiliation of being called 'an ignoramus' and a 'fool and a Fundamentalist'...cut Bryan to the quick."[58] Bryan, though, knew and quoted two biblical verses from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians:

> If any one of you thinks he is wise by the standards of this age, he should become a 'fool' so that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight.[59]

Bryan also was unashamed about being a "fundamentalist," one who viewed the Bible as inerrant. Those who called Bryan a fool and a fundamentalist in one phrase were unknowingly offering him not a slap but a badge of honor.

Even after the trial ended with a verdict against Scopes, some reporters persisted in mind-reading journalism. The Chicago *Tribune* news service stressed Scopes' "intangible victory....[Tennesseans] have begun to think and talk freely."[60] But the *Arkansas Gazette* pointed out that Tennesseans already had thought and talked freely, and noted:

> Darrow's agnosticism enabled Bryan and other lawyers for the prosecution to represent the whole proceeding as an attack on religion and the Bible....[T]he odium with which the prosecution invested the defense of Scopes will cling to it to the end.[61]

Overall, most major newspaper reporters produced so much unobservant coverage that it often seemed as if they were watching the pictures in their head rather than the trial in front of them.[62] The ultimate example of journalistic blindness caused by presupposition came when one New York scribe, under the headline "Scopes is Seen as New Galileo At Inquisition," wrote that the

> sultry courtroom in Dayton, during a pause in the argument, became hazy and there evolved from the mists of past ages a new scene. The Tennessee judge disappeared and I racked my brain to recognize the robed dignitary on the bench. Yes, it was the grand inquisitor, the head of the inquisition at Rome.
>
> Lawyers faded from view, all except the evangelical leader of the prosecution, Mr. Bryan, who was reversely incarnated as angry-eyed Pope Urban....I saw the Tennessee Fundamentalist public become a medieval mob thirsty for heretical blood....[It was] 1616. The great Galileo was on trial.[63]

Many journalists in Dayton did not want to see real pictures. They became notorious for spending as little time with the local people as possible. H.L. Mencken, according to Pegler, had minimal contact with Dayton: "He had an airy suite on Lookout Mountain in Chattanooga, with a tub of ice and a fan blowing a cool breeze as he sat in his shorts after an hour or two a day in Day-

ton."[64] McGeehan did become friendly with a local doctor who, during those days of prohibition, could offer documents more precious than rubies: prescriptions for valid liquor.[65]

Reporters' desire to get away from the physical and spiritual head of Dayton created particularly severe problems on the last day of the trial, which turned from *pro forma* wrap-up to sensation when Bryan and Darrow had their famous confrontation. Many reporters were off swimming or carousing, with the result that other reporters, after telegraphing their own stories, hastily rewrote parts and sent them to the missing reporters' newspapers in order to cover for their friends. Several reporters asked Scopes himself to write parts of the new articles; so journalistic coverage of the trial concluded with a bizarre touch: the defendant reporting on his own case under someone else's byline.[66]

Conclusions and Speculations

Ironically, reporters who praised "open-mindedness" in their stories showed great close-mindedness when confronted with a world view opposed in many ways to their own. The experience of one Scopes trial reporter, Raymond Clapper, shows the pattern.[67] Olive Clapper, his wife, provided in her autobiography a portrait of the journalist as a young Bible-believer in 1912:

> Even though I had known Ray for years, it was not until I was sixteen that I fell in love with him. I can actually pinpoint the evening when his great dark piercing eyes glowed at me as he led the Christian Endeavor meeting at the Presbyterian Church. He read the Bible lesson, announced the hymns we would sing, and opened the discussion.[68]

Four years later, as both were ready to graduate from the University of Kansas, beliefs had changed:

> We owed a lot all our lives to this great state-supported University. It gave us knowledge and confidence in our capacity to learn and to do....We were beginning to question the rigid beliefs of our parents and needed a more reasonable belief....We particularly enjoyed Dr. E.C.A. Smith of the Unitarian Church in Lawrence when he discussed evolution and religion.[69]

By 1923, when the Clappers' first child was born, they were firm in their new faith:

> We outlined and agreed upon certain fundamentals to be taught to our children. Chief among these was our attitude toward religion. We had long since discarded the orthodox teachings of our youth. We could not believe the Old Testament prophets, whose teachings no doubt fitted well the savage age in which they lived but suited our world no better than the Greek oracles. The story of Christ we thought was moving and

> beautiful but we could not accept the virgin birth or the resurrection.[70]

There was no surprise in 1925, therefore, when Ray Clapper told his editor that he just *had* to cover the Scopes trial; as Olive Clapper argued, Bryan would show the world that "the whole case of fundamentalism [was] ridiculous." According to her autobiography:

> Not even chains could have kept Ray from covering that famous trial. In his story of July 17 near the end of the trial, Ray wrote, "Fundamentalist justice has plugged up the ears of this Tennessee mountain jury." ...And so it was. Unbelievable as the trial was to intelligent people, it did have value because the end result was greater enlightenment of people on the subject of evolution.[71]

Other journalists went through similar processes of theological change. Overall, Scopes trial coverage provides an example of philosopher Cornelius Van Til's contention that all views are essentially religious, in that they are based on certain convictions as to the nature of the universe. Readers of every news story are receiving not only information but are being taught, subtly or explicitly, a particular world view. In Kantian terms, newspapers offer not only phenomena, but noumena; not only facts learned from study, but an infrastructure that gives meaning to those facts.[72]

A Van Tilian perspective on journalism does not mean that reporters are never able to sense that there is a different way of looking at things. Frank Kent, a perceptive Baltimore *Sun* correspondent, generally joined the hunt at Dayton with the other reporters, but one day he was given the poetic gift Robert Burns wrote of, to see ourselves as others see us. The headlines and lead on Kent's July 15 article (after a day without a trial session) were:

> DAYTON TO HAVE VARIED VIEW OF ALIEN CULTURE/Impressions Made By Visitors Will Not Be Altogether Favorable ... A lot has been written since the trial began about what the outside world thinks of Dayton. Nothing has been written about what Dayton thinks of the outside world. It would be interesting to know.[73]

Then Kent described some incidents: "On one corner a traveling atheist spoke in a loud voice to a gaping crowd of the absurdity of the Bible," then came to a "horribly hysterical climax." Nearby, "a ribald, jeering crowd of photographers, journalists" and others were "scattering abroad a brand of profanity and a species of joke rather new to the natives." The journalistic mob soon moved:

> Someone tipped the gang off that the Holy Rollers were having another meeting two miles away. A score of cars jammed

> with visitors rushed to the grove. They drove almost into the meeting, turned the glare of their headlights on the pitiful little group...laughed and joked until, abased and afraid, the Holy Rollers abandoned their prayers and slunk off to their homes in the hills.[74]

Kent also told of

> an out-of-town man who, with a number of others, is boarding in the Dayton home of a little bride and groom doing their level best to make everybody comfortable and feed them well. On the table for breakfast were bacon and eggs, fruit, hot biscuits, coffee. Said this man in a terrible tone to the little bride, who waits on the table: "Have you no corn flakes?" Unhappily she replied: "I am very sorry, sir, but we haven't any." "Hell!" said this metropolitan gentleman, and, pushing his chair over, he stalked from the room, slamming the door behind him with a bang.[75]

Yet, after showing such perception, the very next day Kent returned to watching the pictures in his head. He heaped ridicule on the fundamentalists and wrote that "Bryan sits in his corner silent and watchful....You can shut your eyes and imagine him leading them [Daytonites] to burn the unbelievers at the stake. The words 'sacrilegious dogs' seem quivering on his lips."[76] Journalists could not escape presuppositions for long.

NOTES

[1]Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New York, 1922), p. 21.

[2]*Ibid.*

[3]New York *Times*, July 11, 1925, p. 10.

[4]*Ibid.*, July 11, 1925, p. 2.

[5]Chicago *Tribune*, July 21, 1925, p. 1.

[6]New York *Times*, July 26, 1925, Section II, p. 4.

[7]Leslie H. Allen, ed., *Bryan and Darrow at Dayton: The Record and Documents of the "Bible-Evolution Trial"* (New York, 1925), p. 1.

[8]Bryan died one week after the Scopes trial ended.

[9]The Southern small town setting also contributed to the atmosphere of a religious revival. Many reporters knew they would have a colorful backdrop for their trial coverage.

[10]New York *Times*, July 22, 1925, p. 2.

[11]*Ibid.*, July 7, p. 18.

[12]*Ibid.*, July 19, 1925, Section VIII, p. 3.

[13]L. Sprague de Camp, *The Great Monkey Trial* (New York, 1968), p. 274.

[14]Baltimore *Sun*, July 18, 1925, p. 1.

[15]DeCamp, p. 436. Mencken was echoing the intolerance of many anti-evolution spokesmen. For instance, Columbia University dean Henry H. Rusby demanded that universities not recognize degrees from universities that did not accept evolution. A leading liberal minister, Charles Francis Potter, argued that

"educated and enlightened men ought not to rest until the possibility of such dense mental darkness is removed." The New York *Times* then editorialized against "the mental and moral infection which has been let loose upon the land..." (New York *Times*, July 12, 1925, section I, p. 2; *Arkansas Gazette*, June 16, p. 2.) Fundamentalists had some justification for believing that they were being told not "live and let live," but "your diseased religion does not deserve to exist."

[16]New York *World Telegram & Sun*, July 9, 1956, p. 19.

[17]New York *Journal-American*, September 11, 1960, p. 19.

[18]New York *Times*, July 13, 1925 p. 16.

[19]Chicago *Tribune*, July 19, 1925, p. 5.

[20]*Arkansas Gazette*, July 7, 1925, p. 6.

[21]Baltimore *Sun*, July 9, 1925, p. 1.

[22]Atlanta *Constitution*, July 8, 1925, p. 4: "Robinson's drug store, where the argument took place that started the trial, is a modern emporium with a palatial soda foundation. The same chain store drugs are displayed on the counter that you see in the drug store at Forty-second and Broadway."

[23]New York *Times*, July 20, 1925, p. 14.

[24]*Arkansas Gazette*, July 18, 1925, p. 5.

[25]Baltimore *Sun*, July 10, 1925, p. 1. Also see Atlanta *Constitution*, July 9, p. 10.

[26]*Arkansas Gazette*, July 12, p. 1. Also see *Arkansas Gazette*, June 23, p. 1, and June 28, p. 1; and Washington *Post*, July 16, 1925, p. 6.

[27]*Arkansas Gazette*, June 27, 1925, p. 1. Ray Ginger, in *Six Days or Forever?* (Boston, 1958), writes that Governor Peay though the anti-evolution bill absurd. Ginger's comment may be an example of an historian projecting his own views onto his subjects.

[28]Atlanta *Constitution*, July 2, 1925, p. 1.

[29]*Ibid.*, July 8, 1925, p. 22.

[30]New York *American*, July 18, 1925, p. 1.

[31]*Ibid.*, July 14, p. 1.

[32]*Arkansas Gazette* (New York *Times*/ Chicago *Tribune* news service), July 16, 1925, p. 3. Not only fundamentalists saw such news coverage as an attack on Christianity generally. The Catholic Press Association telegrammed Bryan, "There is a vast amount of sympathy for Mr. Bryan and the State of Tennessee among the Catholics of America. A great many of us are highly indignant at the ribald abuse which has been heaped upon your splendid stand by the newspapers and non-religionists of certain sections." (*Arkansas Gazette*, July 10, 1925, p. 1.)

[33]New York *American*, July 13, 1925, p. 1.

[34]*Ibid.*, July 15, p. 4.

[35]*Ibid.*, July 16, p. 2.

[36]*Ibid.*

[37]*Ibid.*, July 17, p. 2.

[38]*Ibid.*, July 12, 1925, p. 1.

[39]*Ibid.* See also *Arkansas Gazette*, July 11, p. 1.

[40]New York *Times*, July 11, 1925, p. 1; July 13, p. 16.

[41]*Ibid.*, July 11, p. 1.

[42]*Arkansas Gazette*, July 9, 1925, p. 1.

[43]Jerry R. Tompkins, ed., *D-Days at Dayton: Reflections on the Scopes Trial* (Baton Rouge, 1965), p. 26.

[44]Baltimore *Sun*, July 17, 1925, p. 1.

[45]Los Angeles *Times*, July 17, 1925,

Section I, p. 2.

[46]*Ibid.*

[47]*Arkansas Gazette*, July 12, 1925, p. 1; July 13, p. 1; July 17, p. 3.

[48]Chicago *Tribune*. See also *Arkansas Gazette*, July 14, p. 5.

[49]Atlanta *Constitution*, July 21, 1925, p. 1.

[50]Washington *Post*, July 21, 1925, p. 2.

[51]De Camp, pp. 435-6.

[52]Los Angeles *Times*, July 23, 1925, Section II, p. 4.

[53]*Arkansas Gazette*, July 21, 1925, p. 1.

[54]New York *Times*, July 21, 1925, p. 2.

[55]*Ibid.*, July 22, 1925, p. 18.

[56]Los Angeles *Times*, July 21, 1925, p. 1.

[57]De Camp, p. 327.

[58]*Outlook*, July 29, 1925, p. 443.

[59]I Corinthians 3:18-19 (New International Version translation).

[60]*Arkansas Gazette*, July 19, 1925, p. 5; see also New York *Times*, July 19, 1925, Section VIII, p. 3; Atlanta *Constitution*, July 22, p. 6.

[61]*Arkansas Gazette*, July 23, 1925, p. 6.

[62]Baltimore *Sun*, July 16, 1925, p. 1.

[63]New York *American*, July 14, 1925, p. 1.

[64]New York *Journal-American*, September 11, 1960, p. 5.

[65]*Ibid.*

[66]John T. Scopes and James Presley, *Center of the Storm: Memoirs of John T. Scopes* (New York, 1967), p. 183.

[67]Clapper, a United Press reporter, became a respected Washington correspondent during the 1930s. He died in a plane crash while covering the end of the war against Japan.

[68]Olive Clapper, *One Lucky Woman* (Garden City, N.Y., 1961), p. 34.

[69]*Ibid.*, p. 51.

[70]*Ibid.*, p. 109.

[71]*Ibid.*, p. 99.

[72]For an excellent discussion of presuppositionalism, see Cornelius Van Til, *The Defense of the Faith* (Philadelphia, 1955). The Atlanta *Constitution* in 1925 showed awareness of the trial coverage's potential effect when it editorialized: "Thousands of columns of newspaper debate have been published under Dayton date lines in the past two weeks, and from it all the cause of the religion of Jesus Christ has not been helped, but the world has been broadcast with the seeds of doubt and skepticism, and only the future can tell what the harvest will be....[A]mong the millions of people who congest the bumper ground between science and the Bible there may be thousands who will now find themselves drifting into the easy-going channels of agnosticism." (July 22, 1925, p. 6). Nevertheless, when Clarence Darrow revisited Dayton a few years after the trial, he saw a newly-built church (Cumberland Presbyterian) and commented, "I guess I didn't do much good after all."

[73]Baltimore *Sun*, July 15, 1925, p. 1

[74]*Ibid.*

[75]*Ibid.*

[76]*Ibid.*, July 16, 1925, p. 1.

Presidential Health Reporting: The Eisenhower Watershed

by Myron K. Jordan

"...[T]he president had ... the first symptoms of an occlusion, or thrombosis, at 2:45 A.M.," Murray Snyder, deputy press secretary, read to White House reporters.[1]

The bomb-shell medical bulletin, revealing President Dwight D. Eisenhower's heart attack September 24, 1955, marked the beginning of a dramatic change in the news coverage of presidential health. The guarded secrecy of personal and political considerations that traditionally had limited news coverage of the Chief Executive's state of health began to crumble. Americans now expect that the Presidency of the United States carries with it an obligation to provide through the news media an outline of presidential health or illness.

Illness and death have shortened the term in office of four American presidents -- William Henry Harrison, Zachary Taylor, Warren G. Harding, and Franklin D. Roosevelt. The central figures in breaking the secrecy of presidential illnesses were Eisenhower and his press secretary, James C. Hagerty. The latter initiated a program of candor with the news media during Eisenhower's two serious illnesses. It marked a watershed in presidential health reporting. Hagerty's policy that the President's health was news and hence valid public information necessary to the functioning of representative government coincided with Eisenhower's own beliefs. The pressures of the 1956 campaign involving Eisenhower and Adlai E. Stevenson failed to alter the commitment to presidential health as news. The result was an openness that forced upon Eisenhower's successors a comparable candor about their health. Health openness also contributed in a subtle way to the increasingly critical role the press assumed toward presidents. Presidents became more human and less magisterial in the eyes of the press.

This article analyzes the presidential health reporting that developed in selected major newspapers and national news magazines in 1955-56. The strictures of medical ethics, personal privacy, and societal taboos about serious illness conflicted then, as now, with the public thirst for news. The press' role as a recorder of events is easily accepted. But the function of the press as critic and as an adversary to the President and the administration in a representative government is

MYRON K. JORDAN is a Ph.D. candidate in the School of Communications, University of Washington. He has twice received the Warren Price Award from the History Division, AEJMC, for outstanding student research papers.

less well defined. How much need the public know about the health of the nation's chief executive? Does an ailing President's candidacy for re-election change the limits on presidential health reporting? Does traditional press skepticism toward government extend as well to the medical opinions of the President's physicians? Should the press report the divergent opinions of non-attending physicians about presidential health? These questions all emerged in 1955-56 and during the Eisenhower-Stevenson campaign of 1956.

Analysis of the press coverage of Eisenhower's health in 1955 and 1956 is meager and scattered. James Pollard studied Eisenhower and the press only from the perspective of presidential press conferences. In Pollard's view, Eisenhower's two major illnesses reduced his personal contact with the press in comparison to the level of contact the press had enjoyed with Roosevelt and Truman.[2] Robert Rutland evaluated the relationship between Eisenhower and Hagerty, emphasizing Hagerty's role as spokesman for the President.[3] Subsequently, Eisenhower's aides -- Hagerty, his press spokesman; Sherman Adams, his executive assistant; and Emmet Hughes, his speech writer -- have recounted their views.

Major sources for this article include the New York *Times*, Washington *Post*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U. S. News and World Report*. Three Pacific Coast daily newspapers that relied upon the wire services for their coverage of the White House were reviewed as a comparison to the New York *Times* and Washington *Post*. They were the Seattle *Times*, Seattle *Post-Intelligencer*, and Portland *Oregonian*. The analysis of these three newspapers showed somewhat less comprehensive reporting of the President's illnesses than appeared in New York and Washington, D.C., but essentially the same style, tone, and emphasis. The Gallup Poll was used to determine opinion trends on presidential issues.

When on September 24, 1955, Eisenhower was rushed to Fitzsimons Army Hospital, the President's aides and the press had little precedent to follow. The true character of the stroke which disabled Woodrow Wilson in 1919 had been carefully screened from the public. Franklin Roosevelt, a victim of polio, followed Wilson's lead by controlling press coverage of his health in several ways. Throughout his administrations the Secret Service enforced rules against photography showing Roosevelt being lifted by aides or seated in a wheelchair.[4] When Roosevelt's overall health steadily worsened in 1944, his personal physician, Dr. Ross T. McIntire, concealed that development. Dr. McIntire called in Dr. Howard G. Bruenn, a Navy cardiologist sworn to secrecy, who treated Roosevelt for hypertension and congestive heart failure, starting in March 1944.[5] The full extent of Roosevelt's ailments remained hidden until Dr. Bruenn revealed it in an article in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* in 1970. Publicly Dr. McIntire insisted little more than a month prior to the 1944 election that "President's Roosevelt's health is 'good, very good .... Of course, he was hit hard by the flu, as were so many people, and hard hit when he was sick recently but he's right back in shape now.' "[6] An unsuspecting nation learned of FDR's death on April 12, 1945.

Eisenhower became ill while on vacation in Colorado. Howard T. Snyder, Ei-

senhower's Army physician, initially attempted to hide the President's heart attack. Acting on Maj. Gen. Snyder's information, White House reporters learned at the 8 a.m., September 24, press briefing that the President had suffered a digestive upset. Presidential appointments for the day were canceled. Murray Snyder, the deputy press secretary, repeated the indigestion statement to White House duty reporters at 10 a.m. and at noon.

At 2:30 p.m. Snyder revealed that the diagnosis of the President's illness had changed. Eisenhower had been taken to Fitzsimons Army Hospital in Denver (where he had been visiting at the home of his mother-in-law) for treatment of "a mild coronary thrombosis."[7] This statement glossed over the fact that the seriousness of the President's illness had been concealed for about twelve hours.

Hagerty flew to Denver the same evening, accompanying the Army's top heart specialist, Dr. Thomas Mattingly. Sunday, September 25, newspapers carried the details of the President's condition. He was resting in an oxygen tent; his blood pressure was normal; his pulse was stable. That same Sunday, one of the nation's leading cardiologists, Dr. Paul Dudley White of Boston, flew to Denver as a consultant to the Army medical team treating Eisenhower.

White's selection may have been either a stroke of genius or simply serendipity. White offered a role model of the Eisenhower image Hagerty hoped to show the press. At sixty-nine (five years Eisenhower's senior), White was a recovered heart attack patient active in a demanding professional role. En route to Denver, reporters interviewed White. Eisenhower's coronary was moderate, he said, meaning it was "neither mild nor was it serious."[8] At the September 26 news conference, Dr. White assumed the role of spokesman for the Army doctors. He explained their medical jargon for reporters. He also pushed his own views, then gaining medical acceptance, of an active life style as the preferred recovery regimen for heart attack patients. He told reporters that Eisenhower would be able to resume some of his presidential duties within two weeks and return to the full responsibilities of the presidency later.[9] White's skillful handling of press conference questions added credibility to the reports Hagerty passed along from Eisenhower's other physicians.[10]

Eisenhower's bedside became the Executive Offices. Reporters normally assigned to the White House jammed the Lowry Air Force Base press room. By not delegating authority to the Vice President in Washington, D.C., Eisenhower ensured that Denver and his convalescence remained the nation's news focus. The New York *Times* issue of September 27 exemplified how the President dominated the news from his sickbed. The *Times* made his recovery its page one lead. The prior day's stock market plunge and its link to the President's illness ran on page one also. A third page one story quoted Republican National Chairman Leonard Hall that the party's 1956 plans were "unchanged."[11]

Inside, the *Times* devoted another full page to the President's health. The coverage included the transcript of Dr. White's Denver press conference and the previous day's medical bulletins from attending physicians. These revealed the Pres-

ident's temperature, blood pressure, pulse, and other physical responses. Reporters also described his meal menus and interviewed hospital staff members on their brief contacts with him.[12]

Press observers immediately noted the contrast between the news coverage of Eisenhower's heart attack and prior presidential illnesses. *Editor & Publisher* grumbled that the White House had withheld the true nature of the President's illness initially. But it balanced this mild criticism with praise for Hagerty's cooperation with the press on a score of other items.[13] The New York *Times*' analyst, James Reston, applauded Hagerty's handling of events. "The staff in Denver," he wrote, "after a temporary lapse immediately after the President fell ill early Saturday morning, has reported the President's recovery with a simplicity that has occasionally been startling." He contrasted Hagerty's openness to the secrecy that marked previous presidential illnesses.[14] A Washington *Post* editorial said that the "American people owe a debt of gratitude to the doctors and press secretaries who have been so frank about President Eisenhower's condition." The *Post* complimented the White House on its "excellent medical public relations."[15]

News magazines treated Eisenhower's recovery as comprehensively as the newspapers did *Time*'s October 3 issue speculated on the President's 1956 candidacy as its lead story and followed with medical bulletins and summaries of Dr. White's press conferences in a reprise of the week's events. It sought out its own medical experts for analysis on coronary thrombosis.[16] *Newsweek* and *U.S. News and World Report* offered their own versions. A reader of a daily newspaper or a news magazine could hardly escape presidential health coverage that was frank, intimate, and more extensive than anyone could recall.

While Eisenhower recovered in Denver, Cabinet members and senior government officials flew there to confer at the President's bedside. Hagerty permitted photographic pool coverage of Eisenhower in a wheelchair on the Fitzsimons Hospital sun deck. "He looked fine -- almost as good as he did before he became ill -- his eyes were bright," a photographer reported.[17] Dr. White wrote a Sunday feature for the Associated Press on heart attack recovery and convalescence. A heart attack is no cause for invalidism, he told readers.

The news focus for more than a month remained on Denver and Eisenhower's recovery. *Time* made his convalescence its lead story in every issue in October. A special Medicine Section devoted to heart attacks in the October 31 issue climaxed the series. *Time* noted in its National News the same week that there was "a revival of serious -- as distinguished from sentimental speculation -- that President Eisenhower might run again."[18] Simultaneously, writers in its Medicine Section saw no medical reason why a recovered heart attack patient could not effectively run for re-election.[19]

What caused the White House news staff to break with the tradition of presidential health secrecy? A brief message relayed by Dr. Snyder -- "Tell Jim to take over." -- gave Hagerty his only guidance from the President.[20] Two days after his attack, Eisenhower, Hagerty, and Dr. Snyder talked over a policy on illness

news. Eisenhower directed Hagerty to "Tell the truth, the whole truth; don't try to conceal anything." Eisenhower's recollection of the secrecy and confusion surrounding President Wilson's 1919 illness prompted the decision. But later when shown news reports of his physiological functions, Eisenhower's reaction was "acute embarrassment." Eisenhower told Hagerty the medical bulletins carried "realism too far."[21]

Hagerty, who had initiated the first steps of an openness policy before this conference with Eisenhower, knew well the denials that hid Roosevelt's illness. As candidate Thomas Dewey's press secretary in 1944, Hagerty had shared in the bitterness the Republican candidate felt over FDR's concealment of his deteriorating health from the press and the public.[22]

Hagerty's background in news, on Wall Street, and as a press secretary in three presidential campaigns helped to shape his decision for openness. Hagerty had been a New York *Times* reporter from 1934 to 1943, and he realized the President's illness was simply another dimension of the White House news beat, Hagerty's responsibility. He also had spent a year working on Wall Street before earning his B.A. at Columbia and understood the sensitivity of the stock exchanges and other financial markets to presidential news. His political instincts had been honed by his years as Gov. Dewey's press secretary, his role in the governor's two ill-fated campaigns for the presidency, and his involvement in Eisenhower's 1952 campaign. The President had confided in Hagerty in July 1954 his intention of seeking a second term in 1956.[23] Faced with the news and the financial and political realities before him, Hagerty had no choice but to subordinate Eisenhower's personal privacy to a policy of openness about his health.

Hagerty knew from his experience in the 1944 campaign that the President's illness could not be concealed from the news media. The exigencies of war had helped make Roosevelt's efforts successful. Hagerty could either use the news of the President's illness to the incumbent's advantage or run the risk that Eisenhower's opponents within the right wing of the Republican party would use it to block his renomination. Hagerty's strategy of openness strengthened the President's chances for renomination; secrecy and public suspicion, he believed, would aid the President's foes.[24]

Hagerty also decided to control the damage done with the press by Dr. Snyder's deliberately misleading first report of Eisenhower's illness. It had raised suspicions that the press secretary was capable of the same tactics that had hidden previous presidential illnesses. The doctor was ordered to write a report that would justify his concealment of the President's heart attack for twelve hours. "I postponed pubic announcement," Dr. Snyder said, "because I wished the President to benefit from the rest and quiet induced by the sedation incident to combating the initial manifestation."[25] Dr. Snyder said the false indigestion report also protected Eisenhower's family from alarm.

Politically, Eisenhower's openness worked. An early January 1956 Gallup Poll showed 56 percent of the respondents expected he would be a candidate.[26] This

was a substantial improvement over the October 1955 response immediately after his heart attack. Then 62 percent said they did not expect Eisenhower to be a candidate in 1956. At the time of the poll, he had not announced his candidacy and was still recovering. Even more startling, 77 percent of the respondents approved his handling of the presidency even though most of his activities had been delegated to the White House staff since the end of September 1955.[27]

During his December 1955 convalescence at his Gettysburg farm, Eisenhower reconsidered his political plans, talking over 1956 prospects with Hagerty. The latter told the President that Vice President Richard Nixon could not win the Republican nomination even with Eisenhower's help. Eisenhower agreed.[28] Even assuming Nixon's nomination, the current polls matching Nixon and Stevenson, the leading Democratic candidate, showed the Vice President trailing 44 percent to 50 percent.[29] Eisenhower dismissed Chief Justice Earl Warren, the favorite of the moderate Republicans and also the leading Republican in polls if Eisenhower did not run, as unavailable.[30] Eisenhower labeled the Democratic contenders -- Stevenson, Averell Harriman, and Estes Kefauver -- incompetents.[31] Well-timed hints and leaks made the President's announcement of his candidacy at his February 29, 1956, press conference a major media event.

Presidential health captured the nation's front pages again on June 9, 1956, when Eisenhower underwent emergency surgery for ileitis at Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, D.C. But the news that followed diverged from the pattern of coverage of Eisenhower's earlier heart attack. The impending presidential election campaign and the President's recurrent medical problems combined to raise doubts about Hagerty's news handling of the President's health. In addition, the President's critics saw his heath as a way to undercut his acknowledged popularity.

Hagerty continued his policy of openness from a hospital front porch converted into a press room. On June 10 the New York *Times* carried an hour-by-hour chronology of the President's latest illness. It also included transcripts of Hagerty's press conferences, photographs, and complete details of the operation. The Associated Press provided diagrams showing the surgical bypass of Eisenhower's small intestine.[32]

Less than ten hours after the surgery, Eisenhower's doctor told a press conference that the operation had been successful and that "there was no reason why his illness or surgery should prevent him from running again."[33] Eisenhower's doctors qualified their prognosis only with the proviso that the President's new convalescence should follow a normal course.

But doubts that Hagerty's medical bulletins told the full story of the President's health began to surface. Reporters sought out expert medical opinion to complement the medical bulletins and press briefings with the President's doctors. The New York *Times*, for example, interviewed Dr. Burrill B. Crohn, discoverer of the disease that had made Eisenhower's surgery necessary. Dr. Crohn said that ileitis attacks recurred in 30 to 35 percent of his surgery patients. Maj. Gen. Le-

onard D. Heaton, Eisenhower's surgeon, had omitted any mention of this possibility at the June 9 press conference.[34] He had, however, impressed reporters as "an expert public relations man as well as an experienced surgeon."[35] In subsequent press conferences reporters raised the ileitis recurrence issue based upon statements by Dr. Crohn and other medical experts. Hagerty refused to answer these questions on the grounds they came from medical sources other than Eisenhower's physicians.[36]

Paul Butler, Democratic Party Chairman, claimed Hagerty had handled news of the Presidential illnesses "in terms of propaganda" rather than factual reporting. Hagerty denied the accusation.[37] The accusation that the Republicans were using news of the President's illness as political propaganda ignited a debate among columnists. Stewart Alsop, an Eisenhower supporter, acknowledged the questions raised about the President's health, but declared that only Ike himself could decide whether he could withstand the burdens of the presidency.[38] Marquis Childs and Drew Pearson, both anti-Eisenhower commentators, said Eisenhower had been compelled to continue his candidacy against his own wishes by pressure from GOP leaders.[39]

Pat McNamara, Michigan Democrat, in a Senate speech accused Hagerty of trying to cover up the seriousness of the President's latest illness. "I am quite sure," McNamara said, "the President has not been party to the shotgun medical bulletins and the huckster barrage from Madison avenue that has been fired at the American public from his bedside."[40] Reporters who accepted Hagerty's handouts and medical interpretations without challenge were creating a one-party press, he charged.[41] John S. Knight, head of the Knight newspapers, declared that the Washington reporters were being taken in by Hagerty's skillful question dodging. He appealed for a return to "normal skepticism."[42] Reston in the New York *Times* also saw a difference between the press handling of Eisenhower's first and second illnesses. Doctors in disagreement with the President's physicians were now speaking out, he noted. Skeptical reporters were digging into the medical interpretations of the President's press secretary. This was as it should be, he believed. "All this means," Reston wrote, "is that some balance has been restored to the flow of information on an important political subject."[43]

A Presidential aside picked up by reporters kept the health controversy alive. On Eisenhower's delayed visit to Panama in July, he noted to a host, "I don't have much strength but I keep going."[44] Questions about the President's stamina prompted United Press to query Hagerty's office on Eisenhower's recovery from his June 9 operation. Hagerty said the President's muscle tone was better than doctors had expected, and he was not suffering from diarrhea, as had been reported. His weight was still fifteen pounds below the level it had been at the time of his heart attack.[45]

Editor & Publisher, however, had praise for Hagerty's "forthright and tireless handling of the press in giving out all the available information of the President's illness and operation. Until there is absolute proof to the contrary, Mr.

Hagerty gets our hearty congratulations for being honest and fair with the press and the American people."[46] Hagerty had other defenders. The Associated Press in a story on news coverage of the President's ileitis operation said, "You couldn't find a newsman around the hospital who wasn't grateful all over again to Jim Hagerty. He was living up to the wonderful standards of frankness which he set last year in Denver."[47] The Portland *Oregonian* saw the tempest over Eisenhower's operation as primarily partisan politics and blasted columnist Drew Pearson for his attacks on Hagerty. Eisenhower's decision -- to run or not -- should be decided by the President himself and his doctors, not the press, the *Oregonian* said.[48]

Skepticism among White House correspondents over the President's health continued as the traditional September 1 opening of the presidential campaign neared. Democrats suspected Hagerty's seeming candor masked the President's true state of health. At a press conference on August 31, 1956, Eisenhower seemed defensive. In response to a question, he said he would not discuss his health during the campaign. His doctors could, he added, "put out what they choose" after his next physical examination. His face flushing, he went on to say, "If you people think I am healthy, you can say so. If you think I am not healthy, O.K."[49] He added that he felt as well as before his June operation but that he had not yet resumed his former schedule for swimming and golfing.

A reporter pursuing the same line of questioning later in the press conference asked Eisenhower if he intended to present to the public a detailed discussion of his health before the election. "No, I didn't say that," the President shot back. " I said I would go for a full scale exam and the doctors could put out what they choose."[50] There would be no public discussion of his health, he emphasized.

The President's health influenced the campaign strategy of both candidates and the resultant news coverage. Stevenson, the Democratic nominee, intended to demonstrate his stamina and vigor with a heavy schedule of appearances. He made as many as five talks in a single day. The strategy backfired. Stevenson appeared harassed. His normally smooth delivery became stumbling. A television appearance broadcast nationwide from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, turned into a disaster. Under inadequate lighting he appeared gaunt and ill.[51]

Press coverage and health also figured in Eisenhower's campaign strategy. He deferred his campaign's start until mid-September, regaining his strength. Instead of a public rally he opened his campaign with a studio radio broadcast and sought to assume the role of a President and Commander-in-Chief above partisan politics. He declared his intention of ignoring the noise and extravagance usual during a political campaign.[52] But the White House press relations staff lived with a fear. The President might suffer from a minor stomach ache or cold and rekindle doubts about his health.

Hagerty, however, prepared himself to handle news of any presidential illness. But he worried over the suspicions that might arise if Eisenhower were treated by Army doctors. He told speech writer Emmet John Hughes, "If it happens we'll

call in only independent doctors beginning with the head of the AMA, if need be; no personal doctors, no Army doctors, no one who's politically suspect or having attended him before. We'll meet it head on."[53]

As Eisenhower campaigned actively in the last two weeks of September and during October, the health issue faded. An early September survey of political reporters across the nation had claimed that "the overriding issue of the 1956 presidential campaign is the state of Dwight Eisenhower's health."[54] The results were consistent throughout the nation except in the South. There the major concern was school integration mandated by the Supreme Court.

By mid-October, however, the President's health had become a non-issue. Columnist Stewart Alsop declared that all doubts about Eisenhower's health had been dispelled by his appearance on the campaign trail.[55] Reporters wrote glowingly of his healthy appearance and his campaigning vigor. On October 16, the President started a campaign swing through the Pacific Coast states. The trip began with a mid-day appearance in Minneapolis and took him to Seattle, Tacoma, Portland, and Los Angeles before he returned to Washington, D.C.

The press reports emphasized Eisenhower's high spirits and good health. When he arrived in Seattle, the *Post -Intelligencer* reported, "Not withstanding the long day which included a flight across the nation, the President looked well and relaxed as he emerged with Mamie at his side from the Columbine."[56] Edgar E. Eisenhower, the President's brother and overnight host in Tacoma, said, "He looks good -- very good. He looks a lot better than I feel. He has learned to relax and take things as they come."[57] The newsmen covering the President's Tacoma speech endorsed his brother's opinion. They saw him "looking extremely well and vigorous during his two-day visit to Seattle and Tacoma. Ike said for the second time that he feels better than he had for a long time. He celebrated his 66th birthday last Saturday."[58] The only presidential ailment to make news occurred in Los Angeles, where Eisenhower's eye became inflamed from an errant particle of confetti. Dr. Snyder removed the confetti and said the President would still have a bloodshot eye when he returned to Washington, D.C., the next day.[59]

Eisenhower's overwhelming victory on November 6, 1956, matched within fractional percentage points the predictions of the Gallup and Roper polls. Presidential health had not been the controlling factor in the election as the press earlier had expected. Instead, Hagerty's openness had converted the President's health from a state secret to an everyday event. The locus of issues shifted away from his health also because of the Hungarian revolt and the Suez Canal crisis. Openness in the final, critical month of the campaign took the form of several carefully paced political speech swings, portraying the President as an active, resilient campaigner. No medical news developments undermined Hagerty's policies.

Conclusions

Eisenhower and Hagerty broke with the past by handling Eisenhower's illness as legitimate news of the Presidency rather than as the private illness of a politi-

cian. It was a step made possible both by events and the personalities of the President and his Press Secretary.

Hagerty's own projection of his role as press secretary indicated his beliefs. Meeting with White House reporters for the first time after taking over in 1953, he had outlined these ground rules: no exclusives, no favorites; "I don't know" meant exactly that; "No comment" did not mean anything else. "Aside from that," Hagerty told the reporters, "I'm here to help you get the news. I am also here to work for one man, who happens to be the President. And I will do that to the best of my ability."[60]

Eisenhower for his part brought to the White House a delegative style of leadership and a mind set that could accept with grace the limitations illness imposed upon him. Hagerty fulfilled his commitment to the press and to the President through the openness policy. Eisenhower, filling his first and only elective office, could accept Hagerty's actions as the proper exercise of the authority delegated to him. In addition, Eisenhower's response to the issue was shaped in part by his distasteful recollections of the beleaguered Wilson Administration in 1919-20 when secrecy on the President's illness aroused resentment in Congress and confused the Executive Office.

The 1956 campaign raised questions about Hagerty's candor and the President's health. But contemporaries judged the criticism of Hagerty as normal partisanship in a presidential election. Eisenhower and Hagerty already had created a model of presidential health news coverage that would remain essentially unchanged to the present.

Eisenhower and Hagerty also moved the relationship between the U.S. President and the press toward a fundamental change. Openness deprived the presidency of some of its imperial status and made the press less reluctant to challenge its occupants. After all, those elected to the nation's highest office were human beings, subject to the same ills and ailments that beset ordinary people. The restrictions that a Roosevelt might impose could no longer be enforced. Questioning, challenging, and seeking to sift fact from subterfuge in the news about the nation's highest official became more acceptable. The relationship between press and president began its subtle shift toward the adversary function that would blossom in later administrations.

NOTES

[1]"Eisenhower Has A Heart Attack," New York *Times*, Sept. 25, 1955, p. 41.

[2]James E Pollard, "Eisenhower and the Press: The Partial News Vacuum," *Journalism Quarterly*, 33 (1956), pp. 3-8.

[3]Robert A. Rutland, "President Eisenhower and His Press Secretary," *Journalism Quarterly*, 34 (1957), pp. 452-6, 534.

[4]Betty Houchin Winfield, "FDR's Pictorial Image, Rules and Boundaries," *Journalism History*, 5 (1979), pp. 110-13.

[5]Jim Bishop, *FDR's Last Year* (New York, 1974), pp. 5-10. See also Howard G. Bruenn, "Clinical Nature of Illness and Death of President Franklin D.

Roosevelt," *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 72 (April, 1970), pp. 579-91.

[6]"Says President Is Fit," New York *Times* Sept. 26, 1944, p. 36.

[7]Robert H. Ferrell, ed., *The Diary of James C. Hagerty*, (Bloomington, 1983), p. 233.

[8]"President's Attack Found Neither Mild Nor Serious; Condition Satisfactory," New York *Times*, Sept. 26, 1955, p. 1.

[9]"Eisenhower Is Improving; Chance of Full Recovery called 'Reasonably Good,' " New York *Times*, Sept. 27, 1955, p. 1

[10]Pollard, p. 5.

[11]"Hall Says Illness of President Has Not Changed 1956 Strategy," New York *Times*, Sept. 27, 1955, p. 1.

[12]"Transcript of Heart Specialist's New Conference on President's Illness and Condition," New York *Times*, Sept. 27, 1955, p. 21.

[13]"Ike's Illness," *Editor and Publisher*, Oct. 1, 1955.

[14]"Capital Displays Candor in Crisis," New York *Times*, Sept. 28, 1955, p. 1.

[15]"News of the President," Washington *Post*, Oct. 4, 1955, p. 14.

[16]"Eight Words," *Time*, Oct. 3, 1955, p. 10.

[17]"Painless Pic Session for Patient Ike," *Editor & Publisher*, Oct. 29, 1955, p. 10.

[18]"The Dark Horse," *Time*, Oct. 31, 1955, p. 10.

[19]"The Chances for Recovery," *ibid.*, p. 62.

[20]Stephen E. Ambrose, *Eisenhower, Volume II: The President* (New York, 1984), p. 272.

[21]Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Mandate for Change, 1953-56* (Garden City, N.Y., 1963), p. 538.

[22]Richard N. Smith, *Thomas Dewey and His Times* (New York, 1982), pp. 432-33.

[23]Ferrell, p. 100.

[24]*Ibid.*, p. xiii.

[25]Sherman Adams, *First Hand Report* (New York, 1967), p. 184.

[26]George H. Gallup, *The Gallup Poll, Public Opinion, 1935-71, Vol. Two: 1949-1958* (New York, 1971), p. 1395.

[27]*Ibid.*

[28]Ferrell, p. 241.

[29]Gallup, p. 1376.

[30]Gallup, p. 1395; Ferrell, p. 245.

[31]Ferrell, p. 240.

[32]Associated Press Wirephoto, Washington *Post*, June 10, 1956, p. 1.

[33]"Doctors Say President Can Run; Condition 'Most Satisfactory'; Hospital Stay Put at 15 Days," New York *Times*, June 10, 1956, p. 1.

[34]"Ailment's Discoverer Sees a Full Recovery," New York *Times*, June 10, 1956, p. 63.

[35]"Surgeon Relates Operation Stories," New York *Times*, June 10, 1956, p. 1.

[36]"Hagerty Doubts Return of Ileitis," New York *Times*, June 15, 1956, p. 6.

[37]"Butler Says GOP Makes an Issue of Ike's Health," Washington *Post*, June 13, 1956, p. 2.

[38]"The President's Illness," Washington *Post*, June 11, 1956, p. 21.

[39]"Post-operation GOP Strategy," Seattle *Post-Intelligencer*, June 14, 1956, p. 16.

[40]"McNamara Charges Ike Data Hidden," Washington *Post*, June 19, 1956, p. 2.

[41]"Hagerty Bars Quarrel Over Doctor's Opinions," *Editor & Publisher*, June 23, 1956, p. 13.

[42]"Press Charged with Keeping 'Hagerty Curtain' Around Ike," *ibid.*, July 21, 1956, p. 10.

[43]"The President and the Press," New York *Times*, June 25, 1956, p. 13.

[44]"I Don't Have Much Strength, Says President," Seattle *Times*, July 21, 1956, p. 1.

[45]"Ike Is Reported Sure of Stamina," Washington *Post*, July 20, 1956, p. 2.

[46]"The Medical Hassle," *Editor & Publisher*, June 23, 1956, p. 6.

[47]"It's A Weary Grind for Hagerty," Seattle *Times*, June 10, 1956, p. 2.

[48]"Ike's Innards," Portland *Oregonian*, July 19, 1956, p. 14.

[49]"Ike Plans 'Forceful Campaign' Based on Record as President," Washington *Post*, Sept. 1, 1956, p. 2.

[50]"Transcript of Press Conference Held by President Eisenhower," New York *Times*, Sept. 1, 1956, p. 8.

[51]Kenneth S. Davis, *The Politics of Honor* (New York, 1967), p. 338.

[52]Emmet John Hughes, *The Ordeal of Power* (New York, 1963), p. 180.

[53]*Ibid.*, p. 177.

[54]"Ike's Health: The Decisive Issue," *Newsweek*, Sept. 17, 1956, p. 39.

[55]Stewart Alsop, "Failure to Communicate Still Plagues Stevenson," Seattle *Times*, Oct. 16, 1956, p. 8.

[56]"60,000 Welcome Ike, First Lady to Seattle," Seattle *Post-Intelligencer*, Oct. 17. 1956, p. 17.

[57]"He Hopes to Live for 20 More Years," *ibid.*, Oct. 18, 1956, p. 1.

[58]"Ike Defeat Fear Voiced by Brother," *ibid.*, Oct. 19, 1956, p. 14.

[59]"Ike's Bloodshot Eye Caused by Confetti," Washington *Post*, Oct. 20, 1956, p. 6.

[60]"Eisenhower Widens Talks with Press," New York *Times*, Jan. 22, 1953, p. 13.

Prophetic Woman: Anne Hutchinson and the Problem of Dissent in the Literature of New England. By Amy Schrager Lang. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987. 237 pp. Cloth, $25.00.

Combining the freedoms of religion, speech, press, and assembly in the same amendment to the Constitution was not a casual and loose consolidation of high-minded principles. The First Amendment defined the nature of public life that had existed in colonial America.

Of all the freedoms of public life, the freedom of religion was perhaps the most difficult liberty for the typical American to adjust to in terms of tolerating dissent. Compared with other forms of dissent, religious heresy was most likely to be viewed as both a personal and a communal assault. From the banishment of heretics to the hanging of witches, religious persecution often could count on popular sanction. And yet the intricate relationship of public freedoms also was evident to the American colonials: without religious toleration the other freedoms had little meaning. The First Amendment was designed to resolve the dilemma. As such, free speech and a free press were a little like bargains struck with the Devil.

Amy Schrager Lang's book on Anne Hutchinson is an examination of the interconnectedness of religious dissent, expression, and public life as it was reflected in the experiences of a seventeenth-century heretic of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, her treatment in history, and her symbolic and metaphorical presence in New England literature. Hutchinson was an antinomian leader excommunicated and banished from the Puritan colony in 1638. She took flight to Rhode Island, ultimately to die in an Indian raid in New York. Antinomians were dissenters who believed in a salvation of personal faith rather than of institutions, good works, or strict obedience to a moral law. They were viewed as a threat to Puritan order, both civil and religious.

In Lang's analysis, Hutchinson was disruptive of an even more fundamental order defining the limits of female individuality, participation in the public sphere, and authority of expression. Hutchinson was beyond the pale of the partiarchal world. Hutchinson's fate became a kind of cautionary tale of woman disturbing the natural order.

What began as a story of religious heresy became a fable of social perversion in New England history and literature. Hawthorne, for example, writing in the first third of the nineteenth century, railed against "female ambition" that produced the likes of a Hutchinson and the "ink-stained Amazons" of female authorship in his own time. Intolerance, over time, grows indiscriminate. That, in a fortunate flash of insight, was the rationale for the jumble of freedoms that constitute the First Amendment. Anne Hutchinson may not have been on the minds

of the framers of the Constitution. But her example helps to explain their work.

Douglas Birkhead
University of Utah

Norman Corwin and Radio: The Golden Years. *By R. LeRoy Bannerman.* Tuscaloosa, Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, 1986. 275 pp. Cloth, $28.50.

Anyone interested in radio's "Golden Age" would enjoy this well-written, informative biography of Norman Corwin. For those who consider themselves broadcast historians, *Norwin Corwin and Radio* is "must" reading.

Corwin was so much a part of radio drama of the 1930s and 1940s that many might consider him -- and with considerable justification -- *the* dominant force of the time. Corwin was a master of both genre of the written word and the medium through which his words came to life. His imprint was a mark of excellence. He loved the craft that he treated with utmost seriousness. "I have a sense of dignity of a half-hour of God's time," Corwin once said. And, as R. LeRoy Bannerman illustrates, in one thematic setting after another Corwin always managed to show an abiding respect for his audience and an exultation of the Common Man.

Bannerman's biography moves the reader briskly through the early phases of Corwin's life and concentrates on his years as radio writer, producer, and director at CBS. At the time, CBS was at the forefront of encouraging the talent and creativity of its employees -- a corporate attitude that nurtured Corwin's efforts. *Norman Corwin and Radio* provides extensive accounts of the Corwin writing style as he prepared scripts for such series as "Columbia Workshop," "So This Is Radio," "26 By Corwin," and "Columbia Presents Corwin." Bannerman creates a vivid image here of the frenetic pace and the constraints and burdensome conditions under which Corwin worked to prepare programs. Also evident is the versatility that he possessed, his ability to work with different dramatic styles, his attention to writing and production details with an insistence on authencity, his inventiveness, and above all his curiosity with the idea of sound tranformed to idea and meaning.

Perhaps most notable is Bannerman's description of Corwin's association with American radio's war efforts druing the 1940s through the writing and production of such dramatic program classics as "We Hold These Truths," "America at War," and "VE-Day Special." Bannerman suggests that Corwin embodied the right talent, intellect, and empathy for the ideals of the war effort to have come along at the time he did. The person, in Corwin's case, was very much a part of the public message he delivered in his war-time radio programs.

Bannerman's detailed account of Corwin's writing procedures and production contributions to these programs, from idea genesis to finished product, might ap-

pear somewhat extended at times, but the reader need only recall, as Bannerman establishes at the outset of his book, that to view Corwin is to view his work. For much of his life, Corwin existed almost entirely for his art.

As radio gave way to television in popularity, Corwin's fortunes changed. Bannerman quotes historian Erik Barnouw as remarking that Corwin "was bound to suffer a partial eclipse with the rise of television; his very prominence made this inevitable." Added to the creative pains endured as a result of television were the pains endured by Corwin's association with other artists who stood accused by the House Committee on Un-American Activites of incorporating a "left-leaning" political philosophy into their work. Corwin very ably defended his patriotism and succeeded in rising above the darkness of McCarthyism. He rose as well above the demise of network radio drama to succeed as a renowned poet and writer for both stage and cinema. In fact, he was able to add to the countless other awards received for his work in radio a 1956 Academy Award nomination and a Film Critics Circle Award for best screenplay for the movie *Lust for Life*.

Bannerman has made an outstanding contribution to the literature of radio history and radio drama. A biography of Corwin has been long overdue. The wait has had its reward, though, in the niche that Bannerman so capably fills with *Norman Corwin and Radio*.

Ronald Garay
Louisiana State University

60 Years of Journalism. *By James M. Cain*, edited and with introductions by Roy Hoopes. Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1985, 240 pp. Cloth, $29.95. Paper, $12.95.

James M. Cain is so well remembered as the author of such hard-hitting novels as *The Postman Always Rings Twice* and *Double Indemnity* that it is often forgotten that he also was a first-rate journalist.

In addition to his best-selling books, Cain wrote stage and screen plays, but Roy Hoopes, the editor of this anthology, contends that Cain was a "newspaperman, playwright and novelist -- in that order."

Cain was born in Annapolis in 1892 but spent most of his boyhood in Chestertown, Maryland, where his father was president of little Washington College. The precocious Cain entered Washington College and graduated at the age of eighteen. He then taught English and grammar at the college's preparatory school.

"The most significant result of this experience is that Cain became a walking encyclopedia of grammar and punctuation, which he maintained until the end of his life was the only thing you could teach a writer -- except for typing," Hoopes writes.

Cain began his newspaper career in 1917 on the Baltimore *American* and

worked briefly on the Baltimore *Sun* before serving in France with the Army during World War I. In 1920 he attracted national attention for his stories in the *Sun* about the murder trial of a coal mine leader in strife-torn West Virginia.

He also attracted the attention of H.L. Mencken, for whom he would later write when Mencken became editor of *The American Mercury* magazine. He quit the *Sun* in 1923, got married, and taught English and journalism at St. John's College in Annapolis. In less than a year, his marriage fell apart; he lost his job; and he ended up in a tuberculosis sanitarium.

In 1924, armed with a glowing letter of introduction from Mencken, Cain got a job on the New York *World*, joining the excellent editorial staff headed by Walter Lippman. Cain remained with the *World* until it folded in 1931. He then was hired by the irascible Harold Ross to become managing editor of *The New Yorker* magazine, a job that lasted only nine months.

Cain later went to Hollywood for a six-month stint as a screenwriter, wrote articles and short stories for magazines, and became a columnist for the Hearst syndicate. He also wrote the book that would make him famous, *The Postman Always Rings Twice*.

"It was that rare combination -- a widely acclaimed literary success and a phenomenal bestseller. And Cain spent most of the rest of his life trying to live up to it," Hoopes writes. Cain again became a screenwriter and wrote several plays, none of which proved to be a hit.

Toward the end of his life, when he was in his eighties, Cain again was writing newspaper articles, this time for the Washington *Post*. "Despite the success of his novels and his permanent place in American literature, he insisted to the end that he was a newspaperman who wrote yarns on the side," Hoopes writes. Cain died in 1977.

Hoopes has selected for inclusion in this book a number of newspaper and magazine articles in which Cain writes elegantly and crisply about a dazzling array of people, places, and things. H.L. Mencken once said Cain "never wrote a bad article," and this book bears out his statement.

James S. Featherson
Louisiana State University

The War Against the Press; Politics, Pressure and Intimidation in the '80s. *By Peter Stoler.* New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1987. 256 pp. Paper, $17.95.

This book argues that current criticism, political pressure, and public dissatisfaction with the American press is a danger of some historical significance, another battle in a long war that is continuously threatening the freedom of the press.

Actually, the point of the book is not nearly that precise. That the present situation is serious historically is more or less implied by juxtaposing history with observations on the current state of affairs. What is closer to the position of the author is that the contemporary American press needs a strong defense of its role, which the writer is all too happy to provide with all the depth and orginality of his metaphor of an embattled press at war for the sake of a free, democratic society.

The result is more of a parade than an offensive charge: a steady march of cliches and the roll of artillery on training wheels. ("The American people would not find it merely difficult to live without the American press; they would find it impossible; they would find it impossible. The American press has a responsibility to the public. It must help keep Americans free by telling them the truth. It cannot discharge this duty by hunkering down and waiting until its attackers go away. It is time for the press to fight back.")

The use of history to rally troops is always a shaky enterprise. Too often the rendezvous with destiny turns out to be just another slit trench. The fact that this book levels some shots at the press and its own power and arrogance does not balance the banality of the work, nor does its concern with history as support and background rather than as the principal topic exempt it from historical criticism. It attempts to apply history to inform the present. That it does about as well as a battle call to remember the Maine.

Douglas Birkhead
University of Utah

Uncovering the Sixties: The Life and Times of the Underground Press. *By Abe Peck.* New York, N.Y.: Pantheon Books, 1985. 364 pp. Index. Paper, $12.95.

The alternative press, heir to the underground press of the 1960s, has become a fixture in American journalism. *The Alternative Press Index* has appeared continuously since its inception in 1970. Temple University Press publishes outstanding articles in *The Alternative Press Annual.* Abe Peck's book treats a brief but important epoch in recent journalism history when the dissident press was not merely a supplement to the mainstream press, but a significant social force. *Newsweek* estimated in 1969 that 500 underground newspapers in the United States had a circulation of two million copies. Peck vividly evokes the heyday of the underground press in the decade from 1964 to 1973. He demonstrates how these products of cheap off-set technology shaped as well as chronicled the cultural and political revolt -- the Movement -- of the sixties. Indeed, one editor cited by Peck suggested that the underground press was the chief organizational tool of the Movement, compensating for the lack of a mass political party in the

1960s.

Uncovering the Sixties traces the roots of the underground press to the adversary culture of the Beat Generation, its inauguration to the appearance of the Los Angeles *Free Press* in 1964. The underground press developed in response to the social upheavals of the 1960s. Cultural protest focused on sexual mores, drugs and rock music, political protest, on civil rights, and the Vietnam War. Peck describes the major crises and confrontations of the era and the responses of a generation of radical journalists.

Uncovering the Sixties is written by an underground press insider. During the 1960s Peck wrote for and edited the *Seed*, Chicago's best-known underground paper, and was a member of the steering committee of the Underground Press Syndicate. Sections of *Uncovering the Sixties* are written in the first person. Extensive interviews with Peck's former colleagues give the volume the flavor of an oral history. Nonetheless the author manages both to pay tribute to the accomplishments of the underground press and to offer searching criticisms of its shortcomings. Peck offers examples of superior coverage of developments by the underground press and of timidity on the part of the established press. He also laments lapses of responsibility by the underground press -- for example, its promotion of the disastrous "summer of love" in San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury. Furthermore, he chastises the Yippies and their leaders, Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin, for manipulating the underground press as well as the mainstream press in organizing demonstrations at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in 1968. Peck, who went on to write for the Associated Press and the Chicago *Sun-Times* and to teach journalism at Northwestern University, makes a balanced assessment of the underground press.

Uncovering the Sixties recounts the efforts to foster collaboration and unity within the underground press through the Underground Press Syndicate (UPS), Liberation News Service (LNS), and periodic national conventions. However, these efforts were undermined by the diversity and, ultimately, incompatibility of the Movement's press. Peck distinguishes between tow principle currents. Papers such as New York City's *East Village Other* and San Francisco's *Oracle* placed a premium on drugs, the expansion of consciousness, and personal liberation. Conversely, the *Black Panther* and the Berkeley *Tribe*, among others, emphasized the need for centralized political action, for racial and class conflict. Attempts to integrate the concerns of the "freaks and the "politicos" in the underground press failed. The conflict between these two tendencies crippled LNS, the underground press service, and the Movement as a whole.

Peck cites a variety of factors that contributed to the decline of the underground press. The spiralling level of government and Movement violence resulted in growing sectarianism and declining popular support. The underground press was infiltrated and disrupted by undercover agents in the FBI's COINTELPRO and Operation Chaos programs. A different threat came from another quarter: cooptation. Peck, formerly associated with *Rolling Stone* magazine, notes the increas-

ing influence exerted by record companies through advertising. Single-issue programs advanced by the women's movement and gay rights advocates, among others, further balkanized the underground press.

Paradoxically, Peck adds, the very success of the underground press contributed to its demise as a significant counter-institution. By the early 1970s topics once considered taboo were being covered by the mainstream press, which became more adversarial in its relationship to government. This was reflected in the publication of the Pentagon Papers in 1971 and in coverage of Watergate in 1972-74. A surprising number of journalists from the underground press made careers for themselves in the mainstream press. Here, in the concluding chapter, Peck might have elaborated a fuller assessment of the nature and legacy of the underground press. He alludes to earlier experiments in radical journalism in American history. But a more systematic comparison with, say, the *Masses* of John Reed and Max Eastman or with the left press during the 1930s would give us a broader perspective for interpreting the underground press of the 1960s.

Nonetheless, Peck's accomplishment is significant. *Uncovering the Sixties* contains a graphic account of the vicissitudes of the underground press. Peck's ambivalence about its track-record results in thoughtful insights about its triumphs and failures.

Ralph Engelman
Long Island University

Library Subscription Form

American Journalism
School of Communication
P.O. Box 1482
University of Alabama
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

Please enter our subscription for____years of *American Journalism.*

_____Within territorial United States. Payment of $15.00 per year is enclosed.

_____ Outside United States by surface mail. Payment of $20.00 per year is enclosed.

_____ Outside United States by air mail. Payment of $25.00 per year is enclosed.

_____ Please bill us.

Address _____

Institution _____

City, State, Zip _____

Country _____

A limited number of back issues (Vol. I, No. 2; Vol. II, No. 2; Vol. III, No. 3; and Vol. IV, No. 1, 2 and 3) are available and may be ordered by writing *American Journalism* in the School of Communication at the University of Alabama. Please include payment of $4.00 per copy (includes $1.00 postage and handling) for orders within the United States. Surface mail orders from outside the U.S.A. should include $5.00 per issue; air mail orders from outside the U.S.A. should include $6.00 per issue.

For Volumes I and II, *American Journalism* was published twice yearly. Publication frequency became quarterly with Volume III.

American Journalism Historians Association

President: Joseph P. McKerns, *Southern Illinois*
Vice-President: Thomas Connery, *St. Thomas*
Secretary: Don Avery, *Southern Mississippi*
Editor, *American Journalism*: Wm. David Sloan, *Alabama*

Board of Directors:

John Pauly, *Tulsa*
Maurine Beasley, *Maryland*
Richard Scheidenhelm, *Attorney-at-law*
Charles Marler, *Abilene (Tex.) Christian*
Sharon Bass, *Kansas*
Alf Pratte, *Brigham Young*
Leonard Teel, *Georgia State*
J. Snorgrass, *Florida A&M*
James D. Startt, *Valparaiso*

American Journalism
Department of Journalism
School of Communication
P.O. Box 1482
University of Alabama
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

Non-profit organization
U.S. postage paid
The University of Alabama
Permit No. 16

PN
4700
.A39

AMERICAN JOURNALISM

The publication of the
American Journalism Historians Association

BYU Library S

OCT 28 2005

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE ASSOCIATION

VOLUME IV (1987), NUMBER 4

AMERICAN JOURNALISM solicits manuscripts throughout the year. Articles are "blind" judged by three readers chosen from the Editorial Board of *American Journalism* for their expertise in the particular subject matter of the articles. On matters of documentation and style, *American Journalism* follows the *MLA Handbook*. Authors are asked to do the same. Four copies of a manuscript should be mailed to the following address:

Wm. David Sloan
Editor, *American Journalism*
School of Communication
P.O.Box 1482
University of Alabama
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

If the author wishes to have the manuscript returned, he or she should include a self-addressed manila envelope with adequate postage.

Inquiries on all matters should be directed to *American Journalism*'s editorial and business offices in the School of Communication at the University of Alabama.

Copyright 1987, American Journalism Historians Association

AMERICAN JOURNALISM

The publication of the
American Journalism Historians Association

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE ASSOCIATION

VOLUME IV (1987) NUMBER 4

AMERICAN JOURNALISM

EDITOR: Wm. David Sloan, *Alabama*
ASSOCIATE EDITORS: Gary Whitby, *Southern Illinois,*
and James D. Startt, *Valparaiso*
ASSISTANT EDITOR: Kelly Saxton, *Alabama*
BOOK REVIEW EDITOR: Edward Nickerson, *Delaware*
GRAPHICS AND DESIGN EDITOR: Sharon M.W. Bass, *Kansas*

EDITORIAL BOARD

Dave Anderson, *Northern Colorado*; Douglas A. Anderson, *Arizona State*; Edd Applegate, *Middle Tennessee State;* Donald Avery, *Southern Mississippi*; Warren E. Bamard, *Indiana State*; Ralph D. Bamey, *Brigham Young;* Maurine Beasley, *Maryland;* John Behrens, *Utica of Syracuse*; Elaine Prostak Berland; Margaret A. Blanchard, *North Carolina;* Roy E. Blackwood, *Bemidji State;* James Bow; Patricia Bradley, *Temple;* John C. Bromley, *Northern Colorado*; James A. Brown, *Alabama*; Karen Brown, *South Florida*; Pamela A. Brown, *Rider;* Michael Buchholz, *Texas A&M*; Lucy Shelton Caswell, *Ohio State;* Ed Caudill, *Tennessee;* Linda Cobb-Reiley, *Denver*; Earl L. Conn, *Ball State;* Alfred Comebise, *Northern Colorado*; Harold Davis, *Georgia State;* John DeMott, *Memphis State*; Wallace B. Eberhard, *Georgia;* Ralph Engleman, *Long Island*; Douglas Ferdon, *Baylor*; Donald Fishman, *Boston College*; Robert S. Fortner, *George Washington*; David M. Guerra, *Arkansas-Little Rock*; Jake Highton, *Nevada-Reno*; Robert Hudson, *Michigan State*; Willaim Huntzicker; Ernest C. Hynds, *Georgia*; Phillip Jeter, *Florida A&M*; Myron K. Jordan, *Washington*; Arthur J. Kaul, *Southern Mississippi*; Samuel V. Kennedy III, *Syracuse*; Sidney Kobre; Peggy Jean Kreshel, *Georgia;* Frank Krompak, *Toledo*; Philip J. Lane, *California State, Fresno*; Richard Lentz, *Arizona State*; Charles H. Marler, *Abilene (Tex.) Christian*; Claudia Martino, *Wichita State*; William Matsen, *Bemidji State*; Zena Beth McGlashan, *North Dakota*; *Florida;* Joseph P. McKerns, *Southern Illinois*; William McReynolds, *Colorado-Boulder*; William Ray Mofield, *Murray State*; Roy L. Moore, *Kentucky*; Patricia A. Muller; *Wisconsin-La Crosse;* Sharon M. Murphy, *Marquette*; Michael Murray, *Missouri-St. Louis*; Patricia Neils, *U.S. International*; Jack A. Nelson, *Brigham Young*; Richard Alan Nelson, *Houston;* Edward A. Nickerson, *Delaware*; Marvin Olasky, *Texas*; Howard S. Pactor, *Florida*; John Pauly, *Tulsa*; Steven P. Phipps, *Indiana;* Stephen Ponder, *Oregon*; Alf Pratte, *Brigham Young*; Barbara Straus Reed, *Rutgers*; Sam G. Riley, *Virginia Tech*; Nancy L. Roberts, *Minnesota*; Bruce Roche, *Alabama*; Richard Scheidenhelm; Thomas A. Schwartz, *Ohio State*; Arthur Seeger,*Wisconsin-Milwaukee*; Michael D. Sherer, *Nebraska-Omaha*; Kim Smith, *Bowling Geen State*; MaryAnn Yodelis Smith; *Minnesota;* Zoe Smith, *Marquette*; Robert Spellman, *Southern Illinois*; Harlan Stensaas, *Mercer*; Ralph J. Turner, *Marshall*; Thomas W. Volek, *Minnesota*

AMERICAN JOURNALISM (ISSN 0882-1127) Editorial and Business Offices: School of Communication, P.O. Box 1482, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487.

This Issue of American Journalism
Is Dedicated to the Memory of

Prof. J. William Snorgrass
1929-1987

Prof. J. William Snorgrass
1929-1987

Prof. J. William Snorgrass, past president of the American Journalism Historians Association, died September 6, 1987.

One of the leading historians of the black press, Prof. Snorgrass was the co-author of *Blacks and Media: A Selected Annotated Bibliography, 1962-1982.* It is reviewed in this issue of *American Journalism.* He was the author of a number of articles on the subject and, at the time of his death, was writing an historiographical essay on America's black press which had been scheduled for publication in *American Journalism.*

Prof. Snorgrass served as AJHA vice-president in 1982-83 and president in 1983-84 and had been elected to a three-year term on its Board of Directors in 1985.

A native of Versailles, Missouri, he received his B.S. degree from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and his M.A. from the University of Minnesota. He had been managing editor of the Post Newspapers in Oakland, California, and had served twenty-one years in the U. S. Army, primarily in military information posts in the Mediterranean, Korea, Okinawa, and Vietnam, as well as the United States. He taught five years at California State University, Hayward, and joined the faculty of Florida A & M University in 1979. At A & M, where he was an associate professor at the time of his death, he served as coordinator of the newspaper journalism sequence and campus advisor of Sigma Delta Chi and was a charter member of the Tallahassee chapter of Blacks in Communication. Only shortly before his death, he had received A & M's "University Teacher of the Year Award" at the August 1987 university commencement.

Prof. Snorgrass died of natural causes in Atlanta, Georgia, where he had been transferred from Tallahassee for surgery. He is survived by his wife, Vilma; a son, Joseph A. Snorgrass, Jr.; and a sister, Mrs. Helen Blackstone.

J's many friends cherished him for his continual affability and good cheer, his modesty, and his willingness always to help any way he could. He will be deeply missed and long remembered.

AMERICAN JOURNALISM

Volume IV (1987) Number 4

171
Charles Key Bruce: Early Journalist in India
By Basil L. Crapster

181
Fictional Techniques in the Journalism
of David Graham Phillips
By Robert Miraldi

191
Book Reviews

218
Index

Charles Key Bruce: Early Journalist in India

By Basil L. Crapster

Newspapers, one of the lasting contributions of the British to Indian life, began on the subcontinent with the establishment of the Bengal *Gazette* in 1780. Within six years, Calcutta supported four weeklies and a monthly. By 1799 the number had risen to seven, plus the official Calcutta *Gazette*. Each of the unofficial papers appeared on a different day, thereby avoiding direct competition. The Wednesday paper was the *Asiatic Mirror and Commercial Advertiser*, founded in February, 1788, and printed at the Mirror Press. In its early years this paper, under Charles Key Bruce, intermittent editor and part owner from about 1790 to 1815, played a prominent role in the uneasy relations between the press and government in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century India. Often harassed, sometimes subservient and never heroic, the *Mirror* survived, thereby helping make the press a permanent institution in India.

The Indian press was essentially for Europeans in India. Mainly Britons, they owned, edited, and published it and modeled it on British prototypes. Ironically, like another British transplant in India, Western education, the newspaper press caused many headaches for the raj. In Britain the government tried to use the free press for its own purposes, as did the opposition. When the government found this impossible to do, it regarded the press with suspicion as at best an inconvenience and at worst a threat. Consequently, despite some progress in emancipation over the course of the eighteenth century, the journals remained subject to a number of restrictions. With the outbreak of the wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon in 1793, the British ruling oligarchy in general and the government in particular became thoroughly alarmed at the threat of foreign invasion and internal revolution. In the ensuing panic, the press was subject to renewed repression, a situation that continued even after the defeat of the French in 1815.

The press in India was even more vulnerable to government pressure than in Britain. Government officials exercised overall political and military control of India from London. The privately owned East India Company directed economic

---

BASIL L. CRAPSTER (Ph.D., Harvard) is professor of history at Gettysburg College. His publications have been concerned with Scottish and English politics and journalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and with colonial and Maryland history.

policy from London. The two institutions, government and company, were understandably much intertwined. In India, government and company officials separated from London by thousands of miles and by months in time, often saw events only from their unique perspective. Some remained preoccupied with promotion and personal profit, and did not welcome independent scrutiny. Even the more public-spirited could not help but be acutely conscious that British India shared the subcontinent with native states, some friendly, some not, and none to be implicitly trusted. The threat of France -- once a major power in India, and still owning minor territories, still occasionally able to threaten Britain's long line of communications, and still trying to stir up trouble for Britain among the native states with money, arms, and agents -- kept alive a sense of insecurity.

In this siege atmosphere, a press free to print information and criticize officials seemed to these officials a needlessly dangerous luxury. They had long run the country autocratically; so there existed few of the protective institutions that shielded individuals somewhat in Britain. The very livelihood of Britons in India depended on the government and the East India Company, either as employer or as the dominant economic force.

There have been pioneering efforts to survey the whole history of the press in India, but not much has been published about individual journalists. In England in the late eighteenth century journalism was a not quite respectable occupation -- one can hardly call it profession; and indeed, it did attract a very mixed bag of individuals, including Scots, Irish, marginal gentlemen, educated people unable to get respectable and stable appointments, dedicated troublemakers, idealists, the outright corrupt, and ambitious businessmen. In the eyes of the top English officials in India, the situation there must have looked at least as dangerous, with many Europeans in these suspect categories. Europeans came to India to make their fortunes and then go home, if possible to assume a higher social and economic status.

The career of Charles Key Bruce was mainly stereotypical, although more successful financially than that of most journalists. Atypical too was the fact that he was an American, born in Maryland in 1762 or 1763, of aristocratic parents.[1] He completed his education with medical studies in Edinburgh, although there is no record of his having earned the M.D. that he frequently claimed to have.[2] In any event by birth and upbringing he could claim to be a gentleman, even if in English eyes only a Scottish-American, a claim of some use in eighteenth century society.

In 1788, like so many ambitious Scots, young Bruce sailed to Bengal, where he would be sure of finding a network of fellow-Scots, but, pleading ill-health, he did not make the return voyage, thereby attracting the unfavorable attention of the government. Although he failed to find employment in Bengal with the East India Company, when his name was published in a list of those to be deported in 1790, it identified him as "Charles Key Bruce, Surgeon. In Calcutta, Editor of the *Mirror*."[3] The deportation order was for the moment quietly dropped, and

Bruce remained in Calcutta in his new journalistic career.

Lack of copies of early editions makes it impossible to say more about the earlier history of the *Mirror* than that it was founded in February, 1788.[4] Starting a new journal required little capital, sometimes merely credit with a printer to bring out the first issue. When the owners included a merchant house, as was to be the case at some points in the *Mirror*'s history, so much the better, since such firms needed to advertise their wares. Job-printing and a newspaper nicely complemented each other in using otherwise underutilized printing capacity. Certainly sales of the paper alone did not produce much revenue. It is estimated that in 1791 the nine independent papers of Bengal, Bombay, and Madras had a combined circulation of about only 2,000.[5] It is little wonder that the Calcutta *Chronicle* of January 1, 1793, thought the field overcrowded: "Lotteries crowd on lotteries, and newspapers on newspapers, but the proprietors do not seem to consider where the money to support them is to come from."[6] One can only speculate on the extent to which this competition influenced the ability of the papers to withstand government and private pressure.

Bruce's partner in the *Mirror* was another medical man, a Company servant named John Shoolbred. Like Bruce, he had first come to India in the Maritime Service. After voyages in 1786-87 and 1789-90 he acquired the Certificate of the Corps of surgeons on the Company's establishment, a source of security that eluded Bruce. The two men remained long-term friends. Ultimately, Shoolbred retired January 17, 1821, and died at Bath October 12, 1832.[7] Perhaps it was he who brought Bruce into the Asiatick Society, a group of Europeans in Bengal who were pioneers in Asian studies. The Society included some of the most prominent political and commercial figures in the European community.

Scarcity of surviving copies of the early *Mirror* severely inhibits discussion of the quality of the paper under Bruce's editorship. Although the paper carried the motto "Nothing extenuate nor hold up ought to malice," neither the government nor the competition might have agreed that the motto was appropriate. On January 22, 1789, the Calcutta *Chronicle*, engaging in some typical press sarcasm of the period about its new rival, sneered, "This glass is so foul that there is no cleansing it."[8] On the other hand, when on October 15, 1791, the *World* rated its nine rivals on a scale of one to ten, it gave the *Mirror* the second highest rating: six, after the India *Gazette*'s seven and a half.[9] In the February 19, 1793, issue of the *Chronicle* there appeared a series of brief characterizations of the Calcutta papers. The characterization given the *Mirror* fits surviving examples of that paper:

> The *Mirror* -- A Debate in the House of Commons, or an extract from a political pamphlet -- Reflections on idioapathy and idisynerossy -- A conjecture or two about a packet. A few paragraphs concerning sugar and indigo -- a letter from a correspondent on the coast, etc.[10]

Judging by the contents, putting the paper together could have been accomplished by Bruce himself, possibly with help from Shoolbred and one of the printing house clerks. Scissors and paste were mainstays in cannibalizing government reports and other newspapers from India and abroad.[11] Newcomers from Britain would see in this borrowing a comforting reminder of the practice of provincial weeklies at home. That newspapers from Europe could be as much as a year old, and sometimes older, was simply an accepted fact of life.[12] Sometimes the *Mirror* announced the arrival of a packet from Europe by bringing out a special supplement with the latest news. Such a supplement could be as brief as a single column on one side of a single sheet. The normal issue of four pages, with four columns to a page, devoted the first page and a half to advertisements.

Readers of the paper could not help but be acutely conscious of India's position on a world-wide ocean highway. Consequently, the editors included items of political and economic interest from other papers about events not only in Britain, but also from France, Spain, Haiti, and Batavia.[13] Reports of ships spoken, arriving and departing, of passengers and shipwrecks had obvious practical importance.

The vast Indian population had only a shadowy existence in the *Mirror*. Periodically, tension would mount between the British and one or more of the native states, especially when there appeared to be French involvement.[14] Then the diplomatic interchanges and military campaign received considerable attention, often to the distress of the government as Bruce discovered on several occasions. However, no editor could hope to survive without following such topics upon which the very future of the small European colonies depended. Other than in such diplomatic and military roles, Indians appeared in the *Mirror* mainly as shadowy figures, detectable only indirectly through the market reports concerning the products they produced.[15] Not infrequently an unusual crime in London would be reported in detail denied most crimes involving Indians in India.[16]

For much information about Indian matter away from Calcutta, the paper depended in part on letters from correspondents who were never further identified, nor is it known whether they were paid for their efforts or whether the editors counted on personal correspondence received by themselves or their friends.[17]

What could be called editorial comment on events was rare. Such comment could be dangerous for an editor. However, the political orientation of an editor could influence selection of material to be included. Despite Bruce's scrapes with the government, the *Mirror* appears to have been fairly bland, without the personal vendettas which sometimes emerged in the contemporary press in Britain and India. So many local events were well known to the small tightly knit circle of readers in Bengal that an editor trying to offer something unique must have been tempted to print personal scandal or data that the government considered sensitive. Given the intrusion of the government into so many matters, its actions could not be ignored, whether in military campaigns, government decrees, or civil or military appointments.

That the eyes of Britons in Bengal were drawn to more than trade and government was apparent in the *Mirror*. Indeed, the editor must have considered other matters safer subjects to handle. Since readers shared the same literary tradition, a wise editor printed poetry of local origin, ranging from imitations of Horace to translations from the Persian, all of which must have gratified those with literary ambitions.[18] In a similar category would fall the reports of local theatrical performances. Letters to the editor touched on a variety of subjects, serious and frivolous. [19] Notices of marriages, births, and deaths, plus a separate listing of deaths in Europe, kept alive a sense of European community. Finally, the reports of local fox hunts and tiger hunts appealed to sporting interests of the Britons at play.

In the late spring of 1798 Bruce sold his interest in the *Mirror* in order to return "to his favorite pursuits in the country."[20] Perhaps he sensed limited prospects in journalism. Perhaps he sensed greater opportunities in other fields. Perhaps his political antennae sensed difficult days ahead for the press. In any event, on July 30, 1798, L.A. Humphrey, signing for himself and other unidentified proprietors of the *Mirror*, joined other representatives of the Calcutta press in complaining unsuccessfully against new postal rates and regulations.[21] Not long after that, the new proprietors could not make payments due on their purchase, and Bruce emerged again as editor and joint owner with Shoolbred.[22] Unfortunately for him a more difficult period for the press began simultaneously.

The year 1798 saw the arrival of a new governor general, the Marquis of Wellesley, and the outbreak of war with the Sultan of Mysore backed by the French. Bruce angered the strong-willed Wellesley with an article on the relative strength of European and Indian forces. In April 1799 Wellesley wrote Sir Alured Clarke, the commander in chief:

> I shall take an early opportunity of transmitting rules for the conduct of the whole tribe of editors; in the meantime, if you cannot tranquilize the editors of this and other mischievous publication, be so good as to suppress their papers and send their persons to Europe.[23]

In May 1799 Draconian regulations appeared banning Sunday papers and the publication of data on finances, troops, and shipping, and imposing prepublication censorship and the registration of the names of owner, printer, and editor. Liberalized somewhat in 1814, these regulations in the main bound the press until 1835.

Although the *Mirror*'s proprietors hastened to register their paper and set up procedures for pre-registration censorship, the authorities moved to expel the vulnerable Bruce, linking his case with that of another difficult journalist, John Howell, Jr. Officials accused both men of being in India without proper authorization and of managing newspapers in a manner displeasing to the government

and dangerous to British interest. If the two did not return voluntarily to America, they would be sent to England.[24]

Howell departed, but Bruce marshalled his defenses.[25] He brought out the medical excuse of December 1788. He offered his medical friends, John Shoolbred and Robert Downie, as sureties for his eventual departure, asking for a year's grace to settle his affairs. Otherwise he would be in financial trouble. He pleaded obligation to support a widowed mother and orphaned daughter, a puzzling claim since his father was to live for some years. Anyway, he did not explicitly say that it was his own mother and sister whom he supported. He claimed that he needed time to collect many debts due him in Madras, Bombay, and other distant parts. He held mortgages on several properties in Calcutta worth 13,000 Rupees and up, to collect which would require equity suits and nine to ten months. He cited his involvement in other legal cases demanding his presence, as well as his project, then about four years old, to establish a chemical industry. That industry -- for the manufacture of paints, colors, painting oils, and dying and bleaching materials -- was hitherto unknown in India. "Regularly bred a chemist," he said that he had already sunk in the venture all of his funds and those of his friends, to the benefit of his many employees.

To overcome his reputation as a difficult journalist, he offered to sell his interest in the *Mirror* where, he admitted, his management had shown lack of prudence. Evidence of prompt sale is a letter of August 6, 1799, from John Maxwell to the government secretary indicating that he had replaced Bruce as editor and that the new proprietors were Maxwell, Messrs. Tulloch and Company, Messrs. Davidson Wilson and Company, and Messrs. Downie and Maitland, and John Shoolbred.[26]

None of the above moved the council which on July 1, 1799, replied with some asperity that Bruce should depart for the United States with as little delay as possible or he would be put on the next ship for England. However, reprieve came in a letter of August 12 from the governor's secretary. Wellesley had received Bruce's petition and suspended deportation until the governor general's return to Ft. William. It is not known which of Bruce's arguments carried the day, but in due course the government quietly dropped proceedings against Bruce.

There followed a period when the paper went through changing ownership and editorial direction. Out of this Bruce re-emerged in the record as editor, again involved in a scrape with officialdom. In a letter of June 15, 1807, signing officially as editor, Bruce answered charges that he had published on April 22 data concerning HMS *Terpsichore* and an official paper concerning Captain Proctor's courtmartial.[27] The outcome has not been discovered. A few years later, in 1811, friction with the government re-appeared when the Mirror Press printed for a "Mr. C. Reed" an anonymous paper that the government labeled a libelous attack on certain individuals.[28] Officials informed the Mirror Press that:

> The Governor-General in Council do not hold Mr. Bruce blameless with respect to the transaction, it being obviously the duty of the proprietor of a press to inform himself of the tenor of the papers which may issue from it. Adverting to his assurances that it was solely from inadvertance that the Mirror press has been rendered instrumental to the publication of the paper in question; and trusting also that Mr. Bruce will be more circumspect in the future, it does not appear necessary to Government to take any further notice of his conduct.[29]

Henceforth all Calcutta papers had to include the printer's name on each work printed.

In 1815 the *Mirror* went through another series of changes in management. Bruce finally left the paper; and the Rev. Dr. Samuel Bryce, the new minister of the Kirk of St. Andrew, emerged as editor and managing proprietor.[30] He proved a more prickly thistle than Bruce for the government. The announcement in the following year of the appointment of "Charles Key Bruce, Esq." as foreman of the grand jury of the Supreme Court would seem to indicate Bruce's acceptance as an established member of the community.[31]

Meanwhile, in distant Maryland Bruce's father died in 1811. His will left his son Charles one third of his estate, which included thousands of acres of land in Maryland and Virginia, if he returned to the United States within seven years of his father's death. Presumably his son met the time limit because he did receive his portion of the estate. Trips to Washington, Maryland, and London followed until his death on December 20, 1826, at his home on Staten Island.[32]

One's estate and legacies are often revealing of character and interest. In the case of Charles Key Bruce they also raise some questions. His estate in Bengal totaled Sicca Rupees 371, 63, or about $175,000.[33] Except for paddy land at "Belgatchee," his old home outside Calcutta, this was almost all in East India Company notes. His estate in America, the bulk of which probably came from his father, amounted to $96,425, mainly in government bonds or bank deposits.[34]

Like a good family-conscious Scot, Bruce left much of the estate to relatives in America and the United Kingdom. A group of legacies, generally £2000 each, went to a number of old friends, many of them identifiable as serving or retired officers in the Royal Navy or Company Marine Service. Bruce made provision for an old servant in Bengal, £2000 for the poor of Musselburgh, Scotland (a town connected with his family), and a similar sum to the Asiatick Society. All in all, except for the large size of the estate, an unsurprising will for a wealthy Scottish-American bachelor home from India.

What sort of person was Bruce? From the period before his return to America, only official correspondence has survived. Henry Maynadier of Annapolis, Maryland, a family connection with Edinbrugh medical training, spoke of Bruce in

1819 as a genteel, sensible man who bore a striking resemblance to his father.[35] Certainly father and son did share certain character traits. When young, the father had been ambitious, adventurous, and possessing the capacity to ingratiate himself with the right people. The son, emigrant first to Scotland, then to India, showed in his correspondence -- judging by the results -- an effective mixture of contrition, appropriate argument, and dignity. His membership in the Asiatick Society could indicate a taste for intellectual pursuits suitable for a gentleman, or a desire for conviviality, or a sure sense of how to make contact with important people. One historian of the Indian press, writing of Bruce's first brush with Wellesley, judges that "Bruce was an able writer and must have given expression to his speculation from public spirit."[36] If some Englishman saw him as just another pushy Scot or American on the make -- a stereotype of the time -- we have no record of it.

Bruce also fits another stereotype of his time, the nabob, a Briton who went out to India, accumulated a fortune under odd (even disreputable) circumstances, and left India to finish his life in some style. Certainly Bruce's career had odd features -- for example, the dubious medical degree -- but then journalism attracted a varied group of practitioners. Particularly puzzling is the origin of the Indian portion of his estate, unusually large for a journalist. Major family gifts can probably be ruled out in the crucial 1790s because in the decade or so after the American Revolution the family estates had to be mortgaged. It is difficult to imagine such sums being made in a share in a newspaper and printing business or in the sporadic medical practice. Too little is known about the chemical business, which is not mentioned after 1806, to hazard a judgment about profitability. In all likelihood Bruce simply followed the example of a number of Britons in India, Company employees and private individuals alike, and undertook on his own account ventures in trading, real estate, and money lending.

What is Charles Key Bruce's place in the history of the Indian press? He appears to have been typical of the adventurous entrepreneurs who entered -- or backed into -- journalism. His paper does not stand out among its competition as a journalistic innovator. In the pursuit of news he angered the authorities, thereby triggering some of the government's imposition of additional controls, but unheroically his paper survived, thereby helping keep the tradition of an unofficial newspaper press alive in India. Major advances in press freedom would have to await two developments, the victory over Napoleon in 1815 which laid to rest the French threat and the political triumph of liberalism in England.

NOTES

[1]He is mentioned in the Ratification of Factory of his grandfather, Charles Bruce, made in Edinburgh, Aug. 7, 1764. Edinburgh Burgh Register, April 19, 1766, Scottish Record Office B 22/8/132.

[2]Matriculation Roll, 1762/3-1785/86, Edinburgh University Library.

[3]Bengal Proceedings, Public Consultations P/3/53, June 18, 1790, Appendix. Calcutta *Gazette*, June 24, 1790. Indian records cited are in the India Office Library, London.

[4]Early copies of the *Asiatic Mirror* are rare. Seen by the author at the British Library, Colindale Branch, London were vol. 6 Nos. 276, 284, and 296 (May 22, July 17, Oct. 9, 1793) and half of Vol. 11, No. 526 (March 7, 1798). The National Library of India has the issue for Dec. 20, 1797, but this was not available. Seen at the Library Company of Philadelphia was Supplement, Nov. 7, 1810. The India Office Library has a run from July 3, 1816, to January 1817, but this is too late for the purposes of this article.

[5]Swaminath Natarajan, *A History of the Press in India* (London, 1962), 24.

[6]Quoted in Graham Shaw, *Printing in Calcutta to 1800* (London, 1981), 4.

[7]Calcutta *Gazette*, May 12, 1832, cited in D.G. Crawford, *Roll of the Indian Medical Service, 1615-1930* (London, 1930), 43.

[8]Quoted in Shaw, 221-222.

[9]*Ibid.*, 7.

[10]Quoted in Shaw, 6-7. "Idiopathy" and "idiosynerossy" were contemporary medical concepts, reflecting the medical interests of the proprietors.

[11]For example, the issue of May 22, 1793, quotes extensively from the Bombay *Gazette* and the Madras *Courier*.

[12]For example, the vote on the execution of the king of France in January 1793 was reported in the issue of July 17, 1793.

[13]For example, the *Mirror* for May 22, 1793, contained reports of an epidemic in Batavia and a letter from Madrid.

[14]The issue of Oct. 9, 1793, explores the political attitudes of the French in the French colony of Pondichery, near Madras.

[15]The issue of Oct. 9, 1793, comments on the preparations of local Indian rulers for the celebration of a religious festival.

[16]The issue of July 17, 1793, gives full coverage to a criminal trial at the Court of King's Bench in London.

[17]The issue for March 7, 1798, published portions of "letters by the last post" describing the advance of East India Company troops on Poona.

[18]The issue of May 22, 1793, has a "Parnassan Corner" for locally-inspired poetry.

[19]A letter from "Causidicus" in the issue of March 7, 1798, comments tongue-in-cheek on a lady's complaint at being deprived of her usual seat in church.

[20]In a letter to D. Campbell, subsecretary of the government, Bruce wrote on June 14, 1799, that the sale had taken place about twelve months before. Bengal Proceedings, Law Council P/166/95, June 14, 1799. No. 2.

[21]Bengal Proceedings, Public Consultations P/4/61, Aug. 6, 1798, No. 32.

[22]Bruce to Campbell June 14, 1799, cited above. Bruce and Shoolbred to G.H. Barlow, secretary to the government, May 14, 1799. Bengal Proceedings, Public Consultations P/5/4, June 3, 1799, No. 12.

[23]Quoted in Nataarajan, 23.

[24]Europeans in India, Raw summaries 0/5/25, 1799.

[25]The correspondence can be followed in Bengal Proceedings, Law Council P/166/94, April 5, 1799 (2), April 12 (2), May 13 (2), June 3 (1.3), June 17 (1.2), July 1 (1.2), Aug. 13 (3).

[26]Bengal Proceedings, Public Consultations P/5/5, Aug. 6, 1799k, No,. 18.

[27]Home Miscellaneous 537, 390-391.

[28]G. Dowdeswell, secretary to the Government, Judicial Dept. P.P., Jan. 5, 1811, No. 20.

[29]*Ibid.*, No. 21.

[30]Letters from Bryce to John Adams, the censor, june 5, 1817, Feb. 18, 1817. Home Miscellaneous 537, 459-497.

[31]*Asiatic Mirror*, June 19, 1816.

[32]Death notice in N.Y. *Evening Post*, Dec. 22, 1826.

[33]Inventory of the Property of Charles Key Bruce, Supreme Court of Judicature, Ft. William, 1828, v. 4, 493, L/AC/34/27/9.

[34]Recorded Dec. 29, 1826, in Richmond County, N.Y., Wills, Book C., 1033ff. The papers concerning the settlement of the American estate are on file in the Surrogate's Court.

[35]Henry Maynadier to C. Birnie, Dec. 20, 1819. Birnie Correspondence, Maryland Historical Society.

[36]Margarita Barns, *The Indian Press* (London, 1940), 74.

Fictional Techniques in the Journalism of David Graham Phillips

By Robert Miraldi

David Graham Phillips, a key writer in the muckraking movement which spanned the years 1900 to 1915, made extensive use of both fiction and nonfiction to convey his message about business and political corruption. But he also blended fiction with nonfiction in many of the magazine articles he wrote before 1906 when his climactic series, "The Treason of the Senate," appeared. This blending of techniques was perhaps a mirror of the confusion in Progressive Era journalism, over whether the "larger" truth was better sought than the "actual" truth, and it may have helped lead to a distrust of the muckrakers' work.

Writing in mass circulation magazines, the muckraking journalists used mostly nonfiction to expose the evils they perceived in the social system. Meanwhile, in literature a similar muckraking was occurring and had in fact been developing since William Dean Howells' work in the 1880s. Upton Sinclair's*The Jungle* is probably the best known of the genre, but Alfred Henry Lewis, Brand Whitlock, and Robert Herrick were concurrently churning out a literature of exposure.[1]

Phillips (1867-1911), who wrote twenty-three novels during his career, was the lone writer who extensively utilized both fiction and nonfiction.[2] Between 1901 and 1907 Phillips wrote six novels which had a dominant muckraking theme: how business and political "interests" had allied against the "people."[3] In 1906 Phillips wrote "The Treason of the Senate," nonfiction articles that called for direct election of U.S. Senators. Serialized in William Randolph Hearst's *Cosmopolitan*, the articles charged that corporate interests controlled legislation by, in essence, keeping senators on their payrolls. The articles caused a furor, enraged the social establishment, and led Theodore Roosevelt to use the word "muckraking" to describe a certain kind of journalistic writing.[4]

The articles represent Phillips' lone attempt at documenting abuses in the social system with what later would be called investigative reporting. After

---

ROBERT MIRALDI (Ph.D., New York University) is an assistant professor of journalism at the State University of New York's College at New Paltz.

1901 and prior to 1906, the period covered by this article, Phillips used either fiction in his novels or a blending of reporting and fictional techniques in his magazine work. This blend of techniques came at a time when professionalism was just emerging and objectivity and devotion to fact were not yet established as ideals. Phillips' work can be seen then as representative, in many ways, of journalism in the Progressive Era. At times he was the documentarian, emphasizing facts and statistics, almost sociological in his analysis; at other times he was the dramatist, recreating events with color and flare. On a more negative note, Phillips wrote in what is characteristic of the "yellow" streak in American journalism, exposing and accusing, but doing little to back up his assertions.[5] In many articles he blended fact, fiction, and advocacy.

Phillips' magazine work, which appeared mostly in the *Saturday Evening Post*, shows how the development of the feature, or color story, led reporters in certain writing directions; how the lunge toward the mass audience may have influenced reporters to enlarge their techniques; and how journalists were confused at the turn of the century over their approach to stories.

Before beginning his free-lance work in 1901, Phillips worked as a general assignment reporter for Murat Halstead's Cincinnati *Commercial-Gazette* from 1888 to 1890; he wrote features for Charles A. Dana's New York *Sun* until 1893, when he became London correspondent for Pulitzer's *World*. Under Pulitzer, Phillips became a well-known feature writer, a war correspondent, national political writer, and a key editorial writer. He was a long-time confidante of the influential Pulitzer, leaving the *World* only in 1901 to pursue his lifelong dream -- the writing of fiction.[6] Under Pulitzer, Phillips muckraked the "trusts" long before muckraking began as a movement, wrote colorful features that seemed to influence other reporters, and did dispassionate political analysis that two authors say did not emerge until the 1930s.[7]

Between 1901 and 1911, when he was assassinated, Phillips wrote twenty-three novels and seventy-nine articles. From 1901 to 1907, when the muckraking movement was in full swing, he produced both muckraking fiction (six novels) and nonfiction (sixty-seven articles). His 1906 articles on the Senate have been called "the high point" and "the climax" of the whole muckraking movement.[8] Yet, the "Treason of the Senate" was harshly criticized as rhetorical, poorly documented, and ideological. Even the editor of *Collier's*, a magazine that was a leader in the muckraking movement, criticized Phillips' "Treason" articles as representing "sensationalism and moneymaking ... a shriek of accusations."[9] But nonetheless, the articles were generally conceded to be an accurate reflection of the state of the U.S. Senate as dominated by corporate interests.

That Phillips' sensational articles were considered flawed is not surprising when one studies his other magazine journalism between 1901 and 1906. It shows he reported with techniques that most of the other muckrakers avoided and that led to criticism even in Progressive-Era America. Certainly his work was a far cry from the fastidious historical work of Ida Tarbell or Ray Stannard

Baker. But Phillips' magazine journalism foreshadowed "The Treason of the Senate" articles and showed why the public, in the years before World War I, may have grown to distrust and reject muckraking journalism as unreliable.

Phillips' persistent technique was to use imaginary characters, composites, and conversations which blurred the line between journalism and literature, between fiction and nonfiction. Between 1902 and 1906 Phillips offered a steady stream of both fiction and nonfiction; so his blurring of lines is perhaps understandable. But as journalism, his reportage showed the mark of either a lazy or timid journalist, an odd charge against one so prolific and also so bold in his 1906 indictment of the Senate. And yet, the characteristic is evident.

Phillips was not alone among muckrakers in his desire to write novels; many of the muckrakers wanted most of all to be writers of fiction. Baker, for example, wrote numerous novels under the pseudonym David Grayson, and Samuel Hopkins Adams wrote novels after his famous patent medicine exposes in 1905. Lincoln Steffens never wrote a successful novel, but he spoke for many of the muckrakers when he complained that editors always wanted him to muckrake, when what he really wanted was to do "real work" -- the writing of fiction.[10] So, the actual writing of stories was likely a labor of love for Phillips. He was slavishly devoted to his work, usually writing almost all night while standing at a large black desk in his Manhattan apartment. He even wrote while on vacation. But newsgathering was a more laborious task, especially considering that the editors of the mass circulation magazines wanted not just facts but flamboyant stories that would draw circulation. "We were after, as [S.S] McClure always insisted, interesting reading material," Ida Tarbell wrote in her autobiography. But, she added, "the basis of all our work were [*sic*] the documents in the case.[11] Some of the best of muckraking came when the reporters named names, as in Steffens' prying into municipal corruption, Tarbell's history of Standard Oil, in Adams' expose of the patent medicine industry, or C.E. Russell's identifying Trinity Church's slum tenements.

But Phillips went for flamboyance, not fact, in many of his articles by making up nameless characters to fit his thesis or theme. He fictionalized types of Americans to back up his statistical base or his thesis. Thus, he presented "Lord and Lady Bountiful," "Mr. and Mrs. Climber," "Mrs. Everybody Knows Who," "The Typical Wealthy New Yorker," and "Mrs. Million." If these were real people they were not identified, and clearly Phillips was not writing short stories. In his serialized fiction that was appearing at the same time as his journalism and which subsequently came out as novels, Phillips gave names and personalities to his characters.[12] And, although critics found his characters flat and lifeless, they differed from the imaginary types and hypothetical examples found in his magazine reportage.

The technique of using composite characters can be contrasted with Phillips' earlier reportage and with the fiction he was writing during the period after he left daily journalism. In his features for Pulitzer, which according to his first

biographer were widely imitated by other journalists,[13] he used real people and situations. Once, for example, he visited the nation's college campuses and linked various colleges with different ideals in American life. Likewise, in his political reportage he recreated scenes and showed keen analysis with his use of facts. His muckraking of the "trusts" in 1893 -- one of his first assignments for Pulitzer -- showed prescient reporting. When he traveled the country in 1899 with presidential aspirants, he revealed their styles, personalities, and platforms with an anecdotal style. Earlier reporting he did for *Harper's Weekly*, while working at the same time for Dana at the *Sun*, used colorful writing to retell events he had covered as a reporter.[14] In novels, Phillips created characters with names and personalities. The ambitious, corrupt publisher in *The Great God Success*, for example, could have been "Mr. Yellow Journalist," but in this novel Phillips created the interesting character Howard, a publisher-editor who resembled Hearst and Pulitzer. He was a composite, but he was developed as a personality, effectively making Phillips' points about the danger of profiteering in journalism.[15]

In many of his magazine articles, however, Phillips attempted to make his arguments by giving the reader examples which seemed to be real, but which he conceded were "hypothetical." In November, 1902, in "The New School Lawyer," for example, Phillips began with a description of a large law firm he called "Brown, Jones, & Smith," which he soon said were made-up names. Nonetheless, he told the reader after a description of how the firm's attorneys operated, that it provided evidence for his thesis that "the lawyer has injected the commercial feature into almost every kind of activity."[16] Progressives, concerned about the pervasive force of commerce, could embrace his thesis. Conservatives could seize upon it as fiction and dismiss it.

Phillips made the same kind of choice -- imagination over reporting -- in at least nine other nonfiction articles. In a three-part series of articles in the *Saturday Evening Post* in July and August of 1902 Phillips attempted to show how "stupendous private fortunes" were altering the face of America's cities.[17] Nothing was new in this subject choice since the advent of millionaires had "become the subject of frequent, anxious comment in the press" by the late 1880s, according to historian Richard Hofstadter.[18] And it is not surprising that Phillips, a Progressive, would focus on the more than 4,000 millionaires in America, since, as George Mowry points out, Progressives believed "there was something corrosive about great wealth" and that the "world of the great rich was usually an idle one, a sensuous one, and often a vicious one.[19] Moreover, for the journalist, the world of the Vanderbilts, for example, was colorful, exciting, full of gossip; in short, it provided good copy and Phillips knew it. But Phillips chose to develop a composite sketch of "the typical wealthy New Yorker." He described "Mrs. Million's Living Rooms" and the "well-bred Mr. and Mrs. Climber." In this and similar articles, he chose the larger over the exact truth, and avoided the advice that Lincoln Steffens was then giving other muckrakers: "Look out for editorial-

izing. That's easy and it doesn't count without the facts."[20]

Phillips paid much attention to the lifestyle of the fabulously wealthy in his fiction as well. At the same time that Phillips was using fictional techniques in nonfiction writing, his portrait of James Galloway (*The Master Rogue*, 1903), who seemed a combination of John D. Rockefeller and J.P. Morgan Sr., appeared in serial form in *Success* magazine.[21] Galloway was the archetype plutocrat, a cliche perhaps but a compelling personality who loved money above all else. Galloway can be contrasted with the unnamed wealthy types who appeared in May and June of 1903 in a two-part series, "Democrats and Diamonds." Here Phillips mocked a "prosperous people, capped by a plutocracy, eager to deck itself with all the recognized insignia of the triumphant class." He described "Mrs. Everybody Knows Who," providing exacting details of her jewelry and clothing. In the end, this slick feature was simply a description of what anyone who was anyone was wearing in jewelry.[22] A fictitious wealthy family took center stage again in "Kitchen Aristocracy," a 1905 article that detailed the types of servants a "fashionable household" employed. He included charts and statistics, but it was unclear if either the statistics or the family were real.[23]

In the early part of the century, Phillips and the other muckrakers had been sketching a picture of wealth's effect upon the rest of society -- elected officials, laborers, small merchants, consumers. But in "The Penalties of Plutocracy," Phillips asserted not only that society was disaffected, but also that "not one of the great financiers knows what peace of mind means....His soul is ravaged by a disease" and "it gives him no rest." The man of wealth feared a social revolution, a stock market collapse, reformers, and sycophants. It was a startling assertion for a society where so many idealized wealth, where wealth was often equated with success. But the audience had to accept Phillips' word that there were such miserable plutocrats because his example was identified only as "one of the richest men in the world... a man said to be one of the great millionaires."[24]

Many of the writers who followed in the steps of William Dean Howells -- Stephen Crane, for example -- chose for their brand of realism life in the city's slums. Most of Phillips' fiction and nonfiction presented people with wealth, but on three occasions he went down to the depths of poverty, and on two of those occasions he used fictional techniques. In a 1903 article titled "Money to Give Away," Phillips argued that "Lord and Lady Bountiful" were giving away too much money to the city's poor and thus "relieving grown people of the necessity of 'hustling' and, worst of all, bringing up their children as paupers and beggars." Phillips called this "the great problem of New York today."[25]

A good contrast to this article was "The Penalities of Poverty" wherein Phillips did not use fictional devices. Instead, he detailed in a methodical fashion how thirty-five million poor people in urban America were duped by merchants, landlords, and food sellers.[26] Phillips' analysis and description were more compelling than if he had given the reader "Mr. Slum Dweller."

Phillips' reporting and writing were likewise more convincing in a special

edition article for *Collier's* in 1904. Phillips was dispatched to Baltimore as a reporter to write about a fire that destroyed a large section of the city. His combination of colorful description and fact brought the fire to life as he described the fire as if it were a rampaging beast devouring the city.[27]

A similar marked contrast could be seen in Phillips' political reportage during the years 1901 to 1906. For the *Saturday Evening Post*, he analyzed the upcoming election of 1904 in an essay format. He looked at the political party strengths in various states, speculated on who would get the vote, and predicted the outcome in the electoral college. His analysis showed a keen knowledge of political sentiment in various states, an outgrowth undoubtedly of his years with Pulitzer when at times he roamed the nation interviewing and watching political candidates on the campaign trail.[28] This reportage shows a different David Graham Phillips and makes one think that, like his mentor Joseph Pulitzer, there were many sides to Phillips. That Phillips was a clever craftsman with words is clear from the articles he wrote in 1901 on the urban daily newspaper. He discussed different types of stories with the insight of one who had worked -- and studied -- in journalism for thirteen years. This history and analysis here are also much like that of Will Irwin's famous criticism of the press that appeared in 1911, but Phillips did not add the muckraking bite that Irwin did in his analysis of the press' blemishes.[29]

Creating composite and fiction-like characters in nonfiction was one journalistic characteristic of Phillips; another was creating dialogue. In an article printed in August, 1903, "As Others See Us," Phillips began with a purported conversation between an attache in a London diplomatic embassy and an "American friend." The Britisher saw American democracy as as "mass mob" topped by a vulgar wealthy class. The democracy was dying, he said, because of the wealthy few in control, a particularly relevant issue in an age so concerned about plutocrats. The point would have had more authority and greater credibility if the speaker had been named and of some importance.[30] Made-up dialogue played a key role also in a September, 1905, article, "The Saint at Home," wherein Phillips looked again at the wealthy. This time he profiled "one of the richest men of the last generation" whose family fortune resulted from "the stealing of a great municipal franchise, the wrecking of a great railway, and the manipulation" of stocks. The man was not named. Depicting life in the mansion, Phillips fictionalized dialogue between servants and employers.[31]

Fictionalization in Phillips' journalism was a constant from the time he left daily journalism until he wrote the "Treason" articles in 1906, when he was stung by the attacks on his work. Muckraker Charles Edward Russell, his friend and former editor at the *World*, recalled in his memoirs that after the articles appeared, he walked with Phillips around the streets of New York City "trying to comfort and console him under the blow. He was terribly cut up...."[32] After the "Treason," Phillips decided to stick to fiction, writing novels with some muckraking elements, but dealing mostly with the role of the "new woman" in indus-

trial society. As Louis Filler, his biographer, has noted, this period may represent Phillips' best work, even though he is most remembered for his earlier muckraking novels and the "Treason" articles.[33]

When Phillips left daily journalism in 1901, he needed to make a living. Thus, as one of his three biographers wrote, "his pen was for hire." This is not to imply by any means that he was not fiercely independent. He simply had a practical grasp of the economics of publishing. "To get circulation there must be popularity," he wrote in 1903 in an article about why magazines succeed. "To get popularity there must be consideration of public tastes."[34] From 1901 to 1906, Phillips chose a story ideal in his writing for a variety of reasons. Pulitzer had taught him how to go for circulation, how to be sensational, readable, and issue-oriented all at once. Phillips' blending of techniques then can be seen as a result of this lunge for an audience. Most of his magazine work was for George Horace Lorimer's *Saturday Evening Post*, which was emerging as the most popular mass circulation periodical in the nation. Lorimer, a close friend of Phillips, was more concerned about genteel fiction than harsh muckraking. Phillips was influenced by his friend, whom he often visited in Philadelphia and who read some of his work before it was published.[35] In writing for Lorimer, who had urged Phillips to leave daily journalism in 1901, Phillips felt freed somewhat of the constraints that nonfiction or journalism imposed. He never made this explicity in his few available letters, however, and he said very little publicly about how he viewed his writing.[36]

A final factor in Phillips' choice of using fictional over real characters might have had to do with the time involved in documenting such reportage. Phillips was prolific during the early years of the century, writing two novels a year and dozens of magazine articles. He did not have time for journalistic research as he labored long over his fiction. Even when he reluctantly tackled the "Treason of the Senate" project in 1905, he did so only when Hearst agreed to assign him two researchers to do the necessary legwork.[37] Phillips was wed to his fiction, and the *Post* articles were a way to provide a steady income while he worked on his fiction. This is not to say they were potboilers. His subject choice was often admirable, in the best Progressive tradition of the time, but his techniques -- the poor documentation and fiction-like techniques -- differed from those of many of the other muckrakers, probably robbed the articles of much credibility and value, and added vigor to the criticism that the muckrakers were unreliable rebels.[38]

One of the reasons that muckraking waned after the first decade of the century was that a distrust of muckraking fact grew in the public mind, aided, of course, by self-interested, business-oriented critics.[39] Even some of Phillips' muckraking colleagues later pointed to his work as more sensational and unreliable than much of the literature of exposure. Will Irwin recalled that the early muckrakers "guarded carefully against letting artistic imagination run away with judgment," but Phillips, "good reporter though he was ... when he became a

great novelist [was] given to see life in terms of the picturesque. If the fact was striking, then it must be true."[40] Ray Stannard Baker added that the critics of muckraking needed to distinguish between honest and sensational exposes, and he lumped Phillips in with the sensationalists.[41] Ida Tarbell said privately that Phillips "always put into his discussions an emotion and an imagination we did not indulge ourselves much on McClure's." Tarbell said that because the muckrakers stuck "to the facts...as nearly as we could establish them by research, the public gave us confidence and respect."[42] Phillips' fictionalization, on the contrary, may have unwittingly given ammunition to those who wished to discredit and derail the reform movement.

NOTES

[1]The rise of this "literature of exposure" is discussed in Jay Martin, *Harvests of Change: American Literature, 1865-1914* (New York, 1967). See also Martin, "The Literature of Argument and the Argument of Literature: The Aesthetics of Muckraking," John M. Harrison and Harry H. Stein, eds., *Muckraking: Past, Present and Future* (University Park, Pa., 1973).

[2]The best account of Phillips' life and work is Louis Filler, *The Voice of Democracy: A Critical Biography of David Graham Phillips: Journalist, Novelist, Progressive* (University Park, Pa., 1978). Other biographies are I.F. Marcossen, *David Graham Phillips and His Times* (New York, 1932) and Abe C. Ravitz, David Graham Phillips (New York, 1966). A bibliography of secondary sources on Phillips is Frank L. Stallings, "David Graham Phillips: A Critical Bibliography," *American Literary Realism*, 6 (Winter, 1970), 1-35.

[3]Although there are muckraking elements in virtually all of Phillips' novels, those that can be considered wholly part of the muckraking movement are *The Great God Success* (New York, 1901), published under the pseudonym John Graham, *The Master Rogue* (New York, 1904), *The Plum Tree* (Indianapolis, 1905), *The Deluge* (Indainapolis, 1905), *The Cost* (Indianapolis, 1905), and *Light-Fingered Gentry* (New York, 1907).

[4]Reprinted in *The Treason of the Senate* (Chicago, 1964), with a fine introductory essay by George Mowry and Judson A. Grenier. The attacks on the article were numerous. See, for example, *Literary Digest*, 32 (March 31, 1906), p. 469, an editorial in *Collier's*, 38, Nov. 17, 1906, p. 9, and "The Teasing of the Senate," *Metropolitan*, 24, June 1906, pp. 394-397. Theodore Roosevelt's use of the word "muckraking" came, in part, as an attack on Phillips. See Judson A. Grenier, "Muckrakers and Muckraking: An Historical Definition," *Journalism Quarterly*, 37 (Autumn, 1960), 552-558, and John E. Semonche, "Theodore Roosevelt's 'Muckrake Speech': A Reassessment," *Mid-America*, 46 (April 1964), 114-125. It should be noted that there were also numerous defenses and much praise of the articles.

[5]Michael Schudson asserts that there were two different forms of journalistic writing in the years when Phillips was learning his trade "story" and "information" ideals. Phillips' magazine work can be seen as matching these

ideals. See Schudson, "Stories and Information: Two Journalisms in the 1890s," *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (New York, 1978), pp. 88-120.

[6]The only account of Phillips' journalism is the author's "The Journalism of David Graham Phillips," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1985. This work has the most comprehensive primary source bibliography. See also Granville Hicks, "David Graham Phillips: Journalist," *Bookman*, 73 (May 1931), 257-266.

[7]Edwin and Michael Emery, *The Press and America/ An Interpretative History of the Mass Media* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.), p. 435. The Emerys' history is often unreliable as it is in asserting that political analysis did not emerge until the 1930s. A good discussion of political reporting is Thomas C. Leonard, *The Power of the Press: The Birth of Modern Political Reporting* (New York, 1986).

[8]Mowry and Grenier, p. 1. Arthur and Lila Weinberg, eds., *The Muckrakers* (New York, 1961), p. 68.

[9]*Collier's*, Nov. 17, 1906, p. 9.

[10]*The Letters of Lincoln Steffens*, V. 1, Ella Winter and Granville Hicks, eds., (Westpport, Conn, 1974), p. 267.

[11]Noted in Kathleen Brady, *Ida Tarbell: Portrait of a Muckraker* (New York, 1984), p. 140. Her reference to pursuing documents is in Filler, *Voice of Democracy*, p. 77.

[12]Only one of Phillips' magazine articles (excluding his serialized novels) can be labeled as fiction. See "Garlan and Company," *Success*, June 1902, 351-356.

[13]Marcossen, p. 184.

[14]Discussion of these articles is in Miraldi, pp. 89-117. See also Miraldi, "The Journalism of David Graham Phillips," *Journalism Quarterly*, 63 (Spring, 1986), 83-88.

[15]*The Great God Success* was published while Phillips was still working for Pulitzer's *World*. He wrote a second newspaper memoir, *A Woman Ventures* (New York, 1902).

[16]"The New School Lawyer," *Saturday Evening Post* (*SEP*), Nov. 8, 1902, pp. 8-9.

[17]"The Millionaires," *SEP*, July 26, 1902, pp. 6-7; Aug. 9, pp. 8-9; Aug. 23, pp. 5-6.

[18]*The Age of Reform* (New York, 1955), p. 19.

[19]*The Era of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York, 1958), p. 98.

[20]Letter from Steffens to Ray Stannard Baker, March 3, 1904, quoted in Robert C. Bannister, *Ray Stannard Baker: The Mind and Thought of a Progressive* (New Haven, 1966), p. 106.

[21]*The Master Rogue, op. cit.*

[22]"Democrats and Diamonds,"*SEP*, May 30, 1903, pp. 448-456.

[23]"Kitchen Aristocracy," *SEP*, May 27, 1905, pp. 3-4.

[24]"The Penalties of Plutocracy," *SEP*, July 8, 1904, pp. 10-11. Phillips makes a similar startling assertion about an unnamed but powerful trust in "A Trust of Trusts," *SEP*, May 23, 1903, p. 3. and discusses one of the nation's most powerful elected officials, "Senator_____" in "Handshaking: A Fine Art," *SEP*, Oct. 17, 1903, pp. 8-9.

[25]"Money to Give Away," *SEP*, June 27, 1903, pp. 8-9. See also, "The Making of a City Slum," *SEP*, July 22, 1905, p. 13.

[26]"The Penalties of Poverty," *SEP*, June 17, 1905, pp. 10-11.

[27]"The Great Baltimore Fire," *Collier's*, Feb. 13, 1904, pp. 2-8.

[28]See "Can the Democrats Elect a President?" *SEP*, Jan. 16, 1904, p. 15; "If a Democrat Should Win," *SEP*, May 14, 1904, p. 8; and "The Assassination of

a Governor," *Cosmopolitan*, April, 1904, pp. 611-624.

[29]"The Story of the City Daily: What It Costs in Men and Money," *SEP*, Jan 25, 1902, pp. 8-9; "The Race for Circulation," *SEP*, Feb. 8, 1902, pp. 11-12; and "The New Theory of Journalism," *SEP*, March 1, 1902, p. 11. Irwin, "The American Newspaper," *Collier's*, Jan. 31 - July 29, 1911.

[30]"As Others See Us," *SEP*, Aug. 8, 1903, pp. 13-14.

[31]"The Saint at Home," *SEP*, Sept. 9, 1905, pp. 4-5. Fictitious dialogue was also used in this article as well as in "As Others See Us," *ibid.*, and "Curing Rich Americans," *SEP*, May 13, 1911, p. 14.

[32]*Bard Hands and Stone Walls: Some Recollections of a Sideline Reformer* (New York, 1933), p. 143.

[33]Filler, *Voice of Democracy*, p. 101. Ravitz, pp. 100-122.

[34]"Great Magazines and their Editors," *Success*, May 1903, pp. 303.

[35]Phillips and Lorimer exchanges are in the George Horace Lorimer Papers, Library of the Pennsylvania Historical Society, Philadelphia, dated June 8 and June 15, 1909. There are other undated letters. John W. Tebbel, author of *George Horace Lorimer and the Saturday Evening Post* (New York, 1948), discussed the relationship in an interview with the author, Feb. 3, 1984.

[36]Only one of Phillips' biographers, Marcossen, had access to Phillips' letters. After his 1932 biography, (see note 3), Marcossen destroyed the correspondence, telling Paul C. Rodgers that the letters were too intimate to be seen by the public. Noted in Rodgers, "David Graham Phillips: A Critical Study," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1955, p. 33. Phillips' papers are in the Princeton University Library, but his material contains mostly copies of his book manuscripts.

[37]Mowry and Grenier, p. 21.

[38]In 1905 President Roosevelt, for one, privately criticized Phillips' fiction and Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, claiming that they "convey an entirely false impression." *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt V. 5 The Big Stick, 1905-1907*, ed. Elting Morrison, (Cambridge, Mass., 1952), p. 229.

39 No thorough study of the decline of muckraking has been done, as Hofstadter has noted, *op. cit.*, note 5, p. 196. See, however, Peter Barry, "The Decline of Muckraking: A View from the Magazines," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Wayne State University, 1973.

[40]*The Making of a Reporter*, (New York, 1942), pp. 170-171.

[41]*American Chronicle* (New York, 1945), p. 204. Like Phillips, however, Baker struggled over writing genres. He wrote in 1904 that he sought "something that will be more than a report on the facts." Bannister, p. 106.

[42]Letter by Tarbell to Louis Filler, *Voice of Democracy*, p. 77.

BOOK REVIEWS

Magazines of the American South. *By Sam G. Riley.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1986. 346 pp. Index. Cloth.

Sam Riley's essays introduce readers to the magazines of the South, past and present. He has selected eighty-nine magazines in thirteen Southern states to profile. The earliest publication began in 1764, and the last periodical covered was established in 1982. The information within the profiles is current to 1984.

Riley faced several problems: defining the South, determining selections to profile, and locating sources of the publications to study. He solved the first problem by considering the South as the states of the Confederacy, adding in Kentucky. His big problem was Maryland, more southern in magazine focus until the turn of the century, but more northeastern in outlook since then. He included as Southern those Maryland publications established before the Civil War.

His selection criteria seem completely personal, even quirky, yet there seems to be a balance. His interest is those magazines with content dealing with things Southern and Southern audiences. He profiles magazines of general appeal rather than esoteric journals of technical publications. He states in his preface that he selected not just the best of the South, although some of the better magazines make an appearance. He selected works showing Southern magazines not as short-lived little dull things, but lively, spirited, and literary, some of them with a substantial publishing history.

The book does not contain profiles of religious publications or black publications because these magazines are planned to be covered or have been covered in other books in the series (*Religious Periodicals of the United States*, edited by Charles H. Lippy, and *Black Journals of the United States*, edited by Walter C. Daniels).

What Riley provides in this book and in the companion volume, *Index to Southern Periodicals* (Greenwood Press, 1986. 459 pp. and appendices), is useful information, organized well. Each entry in *Magazines of the American South* contains a historical profile, information sources (bibliographic information, index sources, and locations sources), and a summary of the publication's history. The summary is of particular use for a quick run-down of the title and title changes (no easy task to track and sort out), volume and issue date, publishers and places of publication, editors, and circulation information when known. Riley also provides two appendices: one, a chronological listing of the publications; two, a listing by state.

Riley provides what seems to be either insider information or information that comes from close scrutiny of the publication over a period of time. For exam-

ple, his profile of *Arkansas Times*, established in 1974, in Little Rock, includes information about its shorter-lived competitor, *The Arkansan*. Riley also notes the appearance of a parody insert in the April 1984 edition that had a bit of fun with the two viciously competing newspapers in Little Rock.

His discussion of *The Double Dealer* mentions several other little known literary magazines of the 1920s, such as the *Phoenix*, published in Atlanta, and *All's Well; or the Mirror Repolished*, published in Fayetteville, Arkansas. These are small details but appear to indicate that the broader observations have validity.

If there is any weakness it is the unevenness of the essays. Some are highly personalized and chock-full of fact and observation. The entry on *New Orleans Magazine* calls it the most readable of Southern magazines. *Mother Earth News* is characterized as a magazine for "America's blue-jean men and blue-jean women." A few entries, however, seem a recitation of information submitted on fact sheets.

The historical entries are more tedious than the contemporary ones. The liberal sprinkling of quotations, included to impart more feel or flavor of the period, seem overly intrusive. The profiles of the older magazines read more like a refrain from Frank Luther Mott. Riley and Mott have both served magazine journalism. There is room for many unique voices in the literature of magazine studies.

S.M.W. Bass
University of Kansas

Press Freedoms: A Descriptive Calendar of Concepts, Interpretations, Events, and Court Actions, from 4000 B.C. to the Present. *By Louis Edward Ingelhart.* New York: Greenwood Press, 1987. 430 pp.

The history of freedom of the press has become the subject of considerable scholarly attention in recent years, and presumably this will continue to be the case as we approach the bicentennial of the First Amendment in 1991. Ingelhart's contribution is as ambitious as its subtitle suggests.

Journalism professor emeritus at Ball State University, Ingelhart has assembled, in a strictly chronological framework, 430 pages of one- to three-paragraph event summaries and quotations that he apparently scoured from hundreds of (unfortunately) unnamed sources. Greenwood Press, which continues to build an impressive collection of books in mass communication, published the typewritten manuscript which contains bothersome typographical, spelling, and other errors.

The book might better be viewed by historians as a *Bartlett's Quotations* on freedom of the press rather than its self-described distinction as a practical and in-depth exploration of "the development of freedom of the press as a concept." Several more scholarly and readable analyses of significant periods and events in the history of freedom of expression provide a better context for the development of the concept than these snippets of famous, infamous, and obscure writings by others without sufficient elaboration on their temporal, social, political, or economic significance. What, for example, is a reader to make of this lone 1774 entry? "The Polish Diet had a Dutch newspaper burned in Warsaw."

Ingelhart made no effort to make sense of these detailed calendar entries except for their order and some broad questions and comments about the future for freedom of the press in a three-page concluding chapter. A highly selective bibliography is included along with a helpful index.

Ingelhart's long-time activism in student press law rights sometimes skews both his selection of items and the emphasis he gives them. He devotes, for example, two paragraphs to the U.S. Supreme Court's *Tinker v. Des Moines School District* (which was decided in 1969, not 1970 as Ingelhart reports) declaring First Amendment rights for public school students, but only one paragraph to the court's more important *Gertz v. Robert Welch, Inc.* (1974) libel case. His promotion of the modern libertarian interpretation of the First Amendment embraced by such groups as the First Amendment Congress and the Society of Professional Journalists, in which he has been active, also clouds his writing on almost all of the press-twentieth century events.

This is an interesting, clearly written, and potentially useful book for writers who desire a ready reference in the chronology of freedom of the press. The book, however, would have had much more authority had the author provided better identification of sources he quotes, a better bibliography for those interested in the original sources for the entries, and a better final analysis of the mountains of materials he must have organized in order to complete the project. Ingelhart's struggles with these matters, which he describes in the preface and chapter 1, might have been resolved had he elected to publish a multi-volume set rather than just one book.

Thomas A. Schwartz
Ohio State University

Acquainted with the Night: The Image of Journalists in American Fiction, 1890-1930. *By Howard Good.* Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1986. 130 pp. Index. Cloth.

Several times in *Acquainted with the Night*, Howard Good seems compelled to

defend his study of what he calls "newspaper fiction," to defend his analysis of material that dealt in emotional truth rather than literal truth. He's afraid, he says, that some might consider it "a dubious place to explore journalism history." But he need not apologize, nor defend. His work contributes to our understanding of journalism's past as much as traditional biography of a nineteenth century newspaper editor might. Good's book, which came out of his University of Michigan dissertation, is a good example of a cultural studies approach to journalism history.

Good considers popular short stories and novels published between 1890 and 1930 that had newspaper reporters as their main characters, plots built around the reporters' work, and themes derived from the nature of that work and its place in society, whether urban or rural. His lists seventy-seven works from that period in his bibliography, as well as fifteen novels published since 1980. Many of the authors were newspaper reporters, and readers will recognize at least a few of them, including Ray Stannard Baker, Richard Harding Davis, Stephen Crane, Theodore Dreiser, Edna Ferber, Ben Hecht, Jack London, Mark Twain, and William Allen White.

Although much of this fiction was highly popular, it also was of extremely low literary quality, "preposterously plotted and woodenly written," as Good puts it. But that doesn't matter because Good's chief concern is with the image of the reporter as portrayed in these works. By looking at that image, Good is able to consider society's view of the reporter, as well as the reporter's own assessment of his or her role.

Good successfully demonstrates how a popular cultural form helped define newspaper journalism and its participants for the public, as well for the emerging journalism profession itself. But otherwise little new ground is broken here. Rather, Good confirms several familiar notions about newspaper journalism that were popular at the time by identifying dominant story patterns: journalism portrayed as either a school or a cemetery, the quest of the crusading journalist, and the idyll of country journalism.

As Good notes, the journalist was portrayed in "highly ambivalent" and even contradictory terms in fiction from 1890-1930: "Journalism invited college men into its ranks; it knocked the college clean out of them. Journalism nurtured aspiring young writers; it destroyed their talent. Journalism was a school of practical experience; it was a cemetery crowded with graves and ghosts." The crusading journalist received the same ambiguous treatment, being depicted as both a saint and a sinner.

These fictional portrayals of journalists clearly reflected society's own uncertainties, as Good astutely observes, the depictions representing "the extremes of what people hoped and feared amid the upheavals that accompanied the birth of the modern era." Consequently, Good's book provides not only a suitable alternative entry into a consideration of the journalism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but also a look at the cultural forces at work at the time,

and it is in making connections between the two that Good provides fresh observations and significant conclusions.

Thomas B. Connery
College of St. Thomas

The Supreme Court and the First Amendment. *By Joseph J. Hemmer, Jr.* New York: Praeger, 1986, 433 pp. Cloth.

The title of Joseph J. Hemmer, Jr.'s third major work focusing on principles of free expression is a little misleading. Given its orientation, a more precise title might be "The Supreme Court and Freedom of Expression" for the book does not specifically consider cases centering upon issues of religious freedom or the establishment clause. Nevertheless, the book does a solid job of what it sets out to do, and that is examine all major cases of communication case law.

In fact, the author quite specifically sets forth his purpose in the preface by stating that the work was designed as an introductory textbook for communication-law courses taught in journalism, communication, and political science departments. While the book clearly can be used for that purpose, the range of First Amendment issues addressed makes it also a serviceable manual for historians. With its inclusion of all cases decided by the Supreme Court in the past, it serves as a useful secondary source for historical research.

Indeed, Hemmer expands the potential audience for his book well beyond a textbook audience by outlining in terse, clear passages major free-speech/free-press decisions that have affected the general public, academic institutions, business enterprises, journalists, government agencies, and the broadcast industry. The organization is topical with chapters focusing on dissent, association, academic freedom, obscenity, silence, libel, privacy, copyright, news, fair trial, broadcasting, and advertising. The book begins with a brief introduction to the Supreme Court's free speech doctrines as enunciated at various times and ends with what the author calls "an attempt to ascertain the meaning of the First Amendment" by in part summarizing the thoughts of major First Amendment theorists and in part analyzing what the author identifies as practical positions adopted by the Court in specific cases. The book concludes with an Index of Cases and a General Index.

The remaining chapters focus on case law through July 1985. Each case is summarized in brief, clearly written, and easily understandable fashion. While emphasis is given to contemporary decisions and precedent-setting cases, decisions of historic importance, including some lower-court cases, are included. In many instances, both majority and dissenting opinions are explained. Each chapter ends with a complete listing of cases discussed in that chapter, a bibli-

ography of recommended readings, a list of key decisions in the area with brief abstracts indicating the precedent set by each key decision, and a summary of the current (1985) status of law in the area. Because they are both information packed and succinct, the latter two features (the key decisions list and the summary section) should delight the historian interested in a bare bones introduction to basic principles of communication law.

Because the work handles such a broad spectrum of issues, the consideration given each area tends to be brief and in some instances uneven. For example, film censorship is discussed in the obscenity chapter with only the *Mutual* and *Burstyn* decisions summarized. Broadcast regulation is discussed specifically only as it relates to licensing-decision guidelines and the historic evolution of the Federal Radio Commission and the Federal Communication Commission. And, because the book does not address individually communication law as it relates to public relations, the reader interested in that area will have to read with an educated eye, for the author does discuss relevant cases but does so within non-public relations contexts. For example, *First National Bank of Boston* and *Consolidated Edison Company of New York* are discussed in the Silence chapter. On the other hand, a full chapter is devoted to Dissent; and within that chapter are *Schenck*, *Gitlow*, *Dennis*, and *Bond* tests are all explained as are the definitional distinctions drawn by the Court regarding Provocative Words, Fighting Words, Threatening Words, and Offensive Words. In addition, Hemmer outlines cases involving Symbolic Speech. Thus, overall the book offers historians a solid introduction to the principles of freedom of expression, and its bibliographic citations suggest additional sources.

Nickieann Fleener
University of Utah

American Literary Magazines: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries. *Edward E. Chielens, ed.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1986. 503 pp. Appendices. Index. Cloth, $65.

Much important literature has been introduced to the public through the medium of magazines. Some, such as the transcendentalists' *Dial*, are well known. Less familiar, but nevertheless significant, is James Russell Lowell's *Pioneer*, whose three issues included such works as Edgar Allan Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart" and "Lenore" and Nathaniel Hawthorne's "The Hall of Fantasy" and "The Birth Mark." For the serious student of the relationship between journalism and literature, acquaintance with a host of other literary magazines is also essential.

Now this task has been eased by publication of *American Literary Magazines: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, the first half of a two-part ref-

erence guide. Ninety-two of the most important magazines are profiled, with numerous less important periodicals covered in an appendix. A second appendix provides a useful chronology of social and literary events and American magazines, 1774-1900.

Acknowledging that very few purely "literary" magazines existed until the twentieth century, Chielens defines as "literary" those magazines that included literature (fiction, poetry, and critical, philosophical, or familiar essays) as an important, but not necessarily the most important, element. Longevity is a partial criterion for inclusion, although as he points out, "many high-quality magazines in America were of short duration; in fact, publications of high quality often failed precisely because of their refusal to appeal to the prevailing taste of the day."

In the introduction, Chielens, an English teacher at Henry Ford Community College (Dearborn, Michigan), outlines some interesting interpretations of the magazine publishing history of this period. For instance, he mentions "the conflict between popular taste, which tended toward the trite and sentimental, and the high ideals of some editors and publishers." He cites *Godey's Lady's Book* as one of the magazines that managed to bridge this gap. And Chielens identifies "regional loyalty" as a second source of conflict among magazines. "Magazines in New England, the South, and the West reflected and helped to develop regional consciousness that fostered distinct and separate literary traditions and attitudes." While not developed in great detail, such observations are certainly grist for thought. Like the individual entries, the introduction is a treasure trove of ideas for further research.

Many literature professors are included among contributors. Their backgrounds seem especially appropriate for this book. Taking a different emphasis from Frank Luther Mott's four-volume *A History of American Magazines*, *American Literary Magazines* stresses the literary aspects and relative significance of the magazines. This approach deemphasizes such details as circulation figures and finances, covering them only when they have a direct bearing on literary developments. The overall quality of the research and writing is high. Among the many stimulating entries are Allison Bulsterbaum's on *Godey's Lady's Book* and Charlene Avallone's on *Holden's Dollar Magazine* and *The Lowell Offering*. Each entry offers a bibliography and a summary of the publication's history, noting title changes, editors, publishers, frequency of publication, and volume and issue data.

Complete with a detailed index, *American Literary Magazines: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* is a most welcome aid to the study of journalism and literature. The next volume, which will cover twentieth-century magazines, is eagerly awaited.

Nancy Roberts
University of Minnesota

Franklin of Philadelphia. *By Esmond Wright.* Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1986. 404 pp.

The publisher has billed this volume as the first comprehensive biography of Franklin to appear in the past fifty years. It adds to our understanding of both an era and a man. It comes on the scene at an appropriate time, our observance of the 200th birthday of the Constitution.

Esmond Wright has the credentials to qualify as a historian. He was director of the Institute of United States Studies and professor of American history at the University of London. He taught at the University of Chicago, University of Pennsylvania, and Ohio State University.

A dimension of Wright's book that adds to its value is his use of material from the extensive collection of Franklin's papers at Yale University. These had not been available to researchers in the past. He took advantage of this source and produced a book that can fill out the reader's understanding of Franklin as a person in the perspective of his times.

After an introductory chapter that presents an overview of Franklin and his world, Wright takes us on a chronological trip through the life of the statesman, inventor, printer, and writer who had such an influence on the formative years of our country.

The chronological thread is interrupted at times as Wright backtracks to cover Franklin's diverse interests. This can interrupt the flow of the account. There seems to be an inclusion of material that some might consider "information overload" such as lists of names of acquaintances and irrelevant details. However, these are minor criticisms and hardly worth mentioning when one considers the assets of this book.

This reviewer appreciates Wright's stage setting. That is, he puts the Franklin story right in the middle of the times and he documents the events of the 1700s and the people who lived them. An example is his splendid description of the 750,000-population London of the 1700s. It provides the reader with a good understanding of the Colonial psyche and the things that influenced it.

There is authenticated information that might be useful to the journalistic historian. For example, Wright records the publication of the first periodical, other than a newspaper, to appear in the Colonies. This was well before Franklin's and Bradford's efforts at magazine publishing.

Wright covers Franklin's wide-ranging interests from meteorology to religion, from economics to racism. Yes, racism. Franklin would be condemned as a racist by some if he were living in today's world and he expressed the opinions cited by Wright concerning race and slavery. Franklin is quoted, as well, regarding his views concerning English as a second language. He noted the influx of people from other countries -- especially from Germany in the case of Pennsylvania -- and he was quite frank in advocating that they waste no time in learning English. Another revelation, at least to this reviewer, was Franklin's relations

with the Indians. His views were formed when Franklin was a member of the Pennsylvania commission to treaty talks at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, in 1753.

Franklin's role as a member of the Continental Congress and the influence he had behind the scenes as well as in them in shaping our country form an important part of Wright's research. He elaborates Franklin's actions and statements that helped shape a nation out of thirteen colonies with diverse interests.

Although Wright's biography contributes much to our understanding of Franklin and his times, it does, by the author's admission, leave several unanswered questions. These questions, as Wright points out, continue to baffle historians. Was, for example, the authorship of the Plan of Union at Albany in 1754 Franklin's or Thomas Hutchinson's, then governor of Massachusetts?

Theodore Conover
University of Nevada, Reno

Exporting the First Amendment: The Press Government Crusade of 1945-1952. *By Margaret A. Blanchard.* New York: Longman, 1986. 448 pp. $39.95.

In an era punctuated by politicians and presidents who call for increased United States efforts to "ensure freedom and democratic principles" throughout the world, it is useful to consider the history of calls for such lofty goals. Professor Blanchard, University of North Carolina, School of Journalism, provides a case study in point. The lofty goal of the American press and government in this instance was freedom of expression -- American style -- for the world.

Professor Blanchard's sifting and sorting of primary material are extensive. A capsule summary of her work might simply point out that American wire services and newspaper organizations envisioned a world in which journalists, free to gather and disseminate information, would help to secure peace and harmony among discordant nations. In as much as it served their purposes, the State Department was sometimes willing to go along with that notion.

Exporting the First Amendment, as any good history should, accomplishes much more than documenting a lofty and obviously unreachable goal. Readers will repeatedly confront the tensions that form the foundations of freedom -- American style. Commercialism v. altruism, government intrusion v. private sector control, national security v. a peoples' right (a need in a democracy) to know are the components of the press-government relationship Blanchard documents and the recipe for democratic government.

Indeed, each of these tensions comes to the forefront in Blanchard's record of what she refers to as the "press-government crusade of 1945-1952." The press possessed missionary zeal for the international benefits to all peoples of freedom

of expression while coveting the less loudly preached economic benefits of eased international restrictions on reporting. In exchange for help from the State Department the American Society of Newspaper Editors was willing to "give [the State Department] all support consistent with honest and constructive editorial comment and [to] assure [government officials] that there is not the slightest feudist tendency here and that all concerned wish you well."

The attempt to export freedom of expression was doomed, of course. Many nations simply lack the social, political, and legal foundations necessary to support the kind of tension that allows a press both to covet increased profits and to preach meaningfully the higher calling of the freedom to know. In few nations can the press cooperate with a government because it believes in that basic system of governance, and at the same time criticize governmental leaders and their policies with determined force.

There is a lesson here that goes beyond the book's institutional histories of press-government goals and machinations during the cold war period following World War II. The First Amendment is constitutional law. Like any law it must be applied consistently and it must be binding if it is to have meaning. Further, no matter the strength of the political force, law also must have legitimacy among both the government and the population. Without these things it is meaningless, as the promises of freedom of expression in the Soviet Union and Cuba on the left, and some Latin American nations on the right, are a hollow guarantee of human rights.

Blanchard's book probably was not intended to generate discussion of current governmental policies. But the fact that it provides material for such discussions as well as a valuable history of the American press is testament to her outstanding work. It is not a book for easy-chair reading. It takes concentration and thoughtfulness to keep all of the players and situations straight. It is a substantive work that should be on the shelves of historians, First Amendment scholars, and those who would believe that democracy can be exported like so many silicon chips or Hollywood movies.

Jeremy Cohen
Stanford University

Newspapers of Maryland's Eastern Shore. *By Dickson J. Preston.* Centreville, Md.: Queen Anne Press, Queenstown and the Tidewater Publishers, 1987. 272 pp. Cloth, $35.

When you dig into *Newspapers and Maryland's Eastern Shore*, you are transplanted back into the newspaper world of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was a happy time, as the Eastern Shore was virtually untouched by the outside world. It was a land overlooked, left stranded by the waves of westward expan-

sion and urbanization. Its outlook, as Dickson Preston contends, remained entirely rural. There were no dominant population centers, and no reason to develop a dominant metropolitan press. Each of the Shore's nine countries, stretching 150 miles, was an entity in itself, forming the eastern shore of Chesapeake Bay. Life was focused in the county seat towns and, to a lesser extent, in the even smaller towns and villages dotting the countryside.

In this climate, small newspapers, nearly all of them weeklies, bloomed by the dozens. Every county seat had one or more. They were country newspapers pure and simple; they were published by homebred, homegrown owner-editors whose viewpoints and standards were those of communities in which they had their roots. Bigotry and provincialism existed side by side with warm generosity and fierce pride in the Eastern Shore and its products.

That is why this book is a worthwhile addition to the literature and story of American journalism. Preston, a Scripps-Howard newsman in Washington from 1952 to 1966, retired to the Eastern Shore to live and write histories of the area and, fortunately, of its newspapers. His prose is clear, concise, and readable. He is fair and objective in his presentations and conclusions, even on controversial issues.

Preston has given us a volume which starts with the first weekly newspaper on the Shore, the Easton *Herald*, founded May 11, 1790, and works its way up to the eleven present-day newspapers, scattered from one end of the area to the other. Some of them are dailies; others, paid weeklies; and still others, free distribution newspapers.

In between those early papers and today's journals, Preston has presented the causes of the economic growth of the Easter Shore and the multiplication of the journals, from the *Kent County News* on the north to the Salisbury *Times* on the south. The author researched carefully and provides background material on each of the editors and the problems they faced. Historians will get the feel of the early period when they read about the disputes and feuds among the editors and the style they used. Many illustrations are printed.

The author gives a concise summary of the events relating to the economic development of the 1820s, the rise of Andrew Jackson, and the split in the Democratic Party and the decline of the Whig Party -- and seeks to relate them to the Eastern Shore newspapers. He points out the ease of launching a newspaper then and describes the printing operations clearly.

But the development of the penny press in the mainstream of American journalism is overlooked, and how it related to the Shore press is not touched upon, unfortunately. Preston devotes much space to the slavery question and shows that the plantations on the shore employed slaves. The papers assured readers the slaves were treated well in the South. One of the great questions was should the Eastern Shore secede from Maryland and unite with Delaware, to which it was naturally linked by geography.

In the fight over slavery, the Eastern Shore was split. The residents were unit-

ed, like the press, in their dislike of Lincoln and his Republican Party. But they also were interested in preserving the Union their forefathers had fought for. A few of the influential weeklies were pro-Union. Examples of the suppression of people and newspaper editors during the war are presented by Preston and may be added to those more generally known.

One of the best chapters in the book, "The Long Siesta, 1865-1923," deals with "Gilded Age Journalism." Preston links the Eastern Shore newspapers closely with the main trends of American journalism as practiced in the big cities by Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst. It is significant to note that in Preston's bibliography of secondary books, he does not list the standard journalism histories, but does list this author's *Yellow Press and Gilded Age Journalism.* If Preston had studied other eras diligently, his book on the Eastern Shore newspapers would certainly have shown better linkages to the mainstream of American journalism and hence would have been even more useful.

Preston states that editors on the shore were not battling for circulation and advertising, as were the metropolitan publishers. The rise of yellow journalism with its sensational headlines, emphasis on sex and crime, and vaunted exposure of graft and exposure of corruption in high places did not create so much as a ripple along Shore newspapers.

Change did occur. Sometime around 1890 a few of the more progressive editors began cautiously to print a little local news on page one. Shore people wore their isolation and poverty as comfortably as an old shoe. They enjoyed the simple pleasures of fishing, hunting, eating, and gossiping.

Although significant trends of the twentieth century are mentioned by Preston -- radio, the Great Depression, World War II, television, and the Bay Bridge -- he does not develop their impact on Shore journals. He does, however, give considerable space to the lynchings in 1931 on the Eastern Shore, H.L. Mencken's attack on the Shoremen and their newspapers, and their rebuttal.

In the final chapter, the author outlines the trend toward chain newspapers and the moving into the Shore of newspaper companies from outside the state. He dwells on the backgrounds of editors and indicates a number of them are graduates of the journalism school at the University of Maryland. At the end of the book about fifty pages are devoted to a directory of Eastern Shore newspapers, telling where you can find every known issue of every weekly and daily newspaper ever published on the Eastern Shore. The directory will prove of immense value for researchers following up Preston's useful study.

Sidney Kobre

The Presidential Election Show: Campaign '84 and Beyond on the Nightly News. *By Keith Blume.* South Hadley, Mass.: Bergin and Gar-

vey Publishers, 1985. 340 pp. Index. $12.95.

This book attempts to examine the performance of television news during the 1984 presidential campaign. Author Keith Blume, director of the Planet Earth Foundation, looks at video journalism from the perspective of someone who expects and gets a show-biz type performance. He begins by recounting personal experiences in which video coverage misrepresented events or issues to the American people. He then looks at 1984 and asks very detailed questions about television news coverage including the selection of film clips, editing, use of sound bites, graphics, and the language of reporters on the scene and anchorpeople in the network studios. Because of his examination of about three weeks' worth of telecasts at the start of the campaign, this is as focused and pointed an analysis of network political reportage as you are likely to find in this format.

The objectivity and accuracy of network television performance are called into question again and again. Details often include a comparison of broadcast leads, examination of biased statements, and content errors or omissions from special programs or program segments from all three major commercial networks, plus CNN and PBS. Blume often credits "The MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour" with doing the most credible job although he does criticize some rambling conversations from even that program. He concluded that the networks suffered from an affliction of scoop over substance with a tendency to avoid in-depth examination of issues, operating in an intellectual vacuum. He claims that the short, shallow "whiz bang" of reporting for network news resembles sports wrap-ups dominated by horse race analysis.

Blume found the Mondale campaign effort consistently described as "troubled" in most early television reports and the Reagan forces characterized as a smooth-running machine. He calls Ronald Reagan "the undisputed king of video wizardry" (p. 232) and contends that television news allowed him to dodge tough issues and dominate press reports. On the other hand, television news coverage reinforced a negative image of Mondale, assisted by the candidate's admission that he came across poorly on television, except for his performance in the first televised debate. Blume also condemns reporting on Geraldine Ferraro because of the quality of coverage on efforts to discredit her candidacy.

This highly critical book, while written from an ideological perspective, is valuable as a historical account of the role of television in 1984 and should be a useful tool for future researchers. The documentation is generally good with sources incorporated into the text and transcripts of televised debates contained in the Appendix. While the author's interpretation of data from some studies may not be universally accepted, he does an adequate job of touching on major works to date from that campaign. In spite of a rehash of common complaints, Blume offers some well-reasoned analysis as reflected in his call for historical background as a prelude to examination of policy issues. Other assertions regarding improvement appear, at times, unrealistic. But if the reader is willing to accept

discussion and recommendations in context, this otherwise provocative and very detailed analysis is worthwhile reading.

Michael D. Murray
University of Missouri - St. Louis

American Television Drama: the Experimental Years. *By William Hawes.* Tuscaloosa, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1986. 272 pp. Index. Cloth. $29.95.

There are intrinsic difficulties involved in investigating the early development of television drama; after all, the works themselves simply do not exist. However, the overriding problem with this book is its failure to identify a coherent purpose. In the Preface, the author argues that "this study is an effort to show what trends in American culture led to a drama for the mass public" (p. XIV). Yet there is little attempt in the text to relate these productions to the general culture, and, in the Conclusion, Hawes argues that once television achieved mass diffusion it swept away live dramas, which " ... like most experiments ... did not really work, and have not, with few exceptions, enjoyed longevity" (p. 151).

Fully one-third of the work is devoted to five appendices. These provide valuable material, particularly in the chronologies of dramas produced by CBS and NBC from 1931 to 1946. Nevertheless, the text itself is too much concerned with exhaustive descriptive documentation. One is confronted with a veritable myriad of names which could have been employed more effectively in the appendices. The need to appear comprehensive seems to have overwhelmed coherent assessment of the significance of the evidence. Is it really necessary to summarize the plot of each drama mentioned? Does the reader really need to be informed, with regard to Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, that "A battle ensues that Anthony wins" (p. 87)? Surely, such material belongs in the appendices.

The book's problems are further compounded by a failure to define the terms employed. What exactly is meant by "television drama"? Do scenes from *La Boheme* and *The Barber of Seville* really qualify for such classification? This failure to question basic assumptions is also reflected in the often unwarranted acceptance of contemporary critical reactions. The author is all too fond of bald assertions such as: "Noel Coward's 1925 three-act farce *Hau Fever* was not outstanding when seen on stage, and it lost much of its satirical bite on television" (p. 77). Reviews in *Variety, Television,* and trade journals are given far too much credence.

The book is at its most valuable when it escapes the vagaries of its methodology to provide striking glimpses of the activities of the pioneers. The account of CBS's elaborate mock production in anticipation of NBC's reaction to the arrival

of Gertrude Lawrence vividly brings to life the realities of live television in 1930. The 1931 CBS memo "Hints for Television Broadcasters" is particularly instructive in its advocacy of active performance: " ... also where songs indicate, roll your eyes and shake your head at television" (p. 36). Indeed, this memo raises important questions. How and why did particular narrative and dramatic techniques evolve out of the technology of live television? What was owed to the theater, to radio, and to film? What was unique to the new medium? Unfortunately, in *American Television Drama*, these crucial questions remain unanswered.

William Horne
University of Alabama

Witness To A Century. *By George Seldes.* New York: Ballantine, 1987. 490 pp. Cloth. $19.95

A sense of outrage over manipulation of the news by special interests has permeated the writing of George Seldes for most of this century. Seldes, liberal and iconoclastic reporter, has written twenty books, most of them critical of the press. Happily, Seldes' indignation has not waned and the result is a provocative autobiography, published in his 96th year.

Those familiar with Seldes' conspiracy theories about the press will find them again in these pages. Seldes maintains that, with rare exception, the "press lords" have been conspirators against the common good by their attempts to manipulate public policy by suppressing the truth. In *Witness To A Century* there is considerable anecdotal support for this notion.

Seldes promises in the Introduction that his autobiography will not be another criticism of the press but a human interest story. He delivers partially on that promise with a narrative rich with impressions of the famous and infamous of this century. There are titillating vignettes of Lenin, Woodrow Wilson, Mussolini, Eleanor Roosevelt, Emma Goldman, and others, composed from Seldes' notebooks. The narrative traces his career as a cub reporter in Pittsburgh, a foreign correspondent, and eventually publisher of his own newsletter. Much of the importance of this autobiography derives from his interests and interactions with this century's gallery of heroes and villains.

Despite the author's promise to minimize press criticism, it inevitably ends up a unifying theme. It is probably impossible for someone with Seldes' convictions about his profession to avoid condemning the shoddy behavior of his colleagues and their bosses. Seldes applies litmus tests throughout to categorize the ethical behavior of his fellow journalists. Those who passed the test were journalists who stood up to Fascism during the Spanish Civil War, those who opposed the jingoism of press lords such as William Randolph Hearst and Col.

Robert McCormick, and those who raised their careers opposing the Dies Committee and McCarthyism.

Readers interested in the century's artists and writers will be delighted with gossipy anecdotes about Seldes' encounters with Pablo Picasso, Isadora Duncan, Sarah Bernhardt, Ernest Hemingway, Theodore Dreiser, and Seldes' friend Sinclair Lewis. Seldes has a special list of scoundrels he calls "SOBs." Three journalists are on the list: columnist Westbrook Pegler (a "slanderous reactionary"), radio commentator Fulton Lewis, Jr. (a "helper of Hitler"), and right-wing columnist George Sokolsky (a "crook"). Some non-journalists, like Errol Flynn (a "despicable human being"), are also among them.

Seldes' autobiography should be of interest to more than historians of journalism. It should be useful to those attempting to understand the gatekeeping process on a large scale, particularly the role played by money and politics in news selection and coverage. Given the historical record and Seldes' own experiences, it is difficult to dismiss his insights into this process. He argues compellingly that powerful, well-financed interests have attempted to subvert democratic processes by direct and nefarious influence on the press. Seldes should be studied also by those who have lost -- or who never possessed -- a sense of outrage over suppression of the truth. They might restore their consciences by peering into the soul of this muckraker.

Frank J. Krompak
University of Toledo

Worldly Power: The Making of The Wall Street Journal. *By Edward Scharff.* New York: The New American Library, 1986. 305 pp. Index. Cloth, $18.95.

The *Wall Street Journal* has not always been a sexy topic for research. The standard journalism history texts have had little to say about it other than noting its place as the first national newspaper.

Edward Scharff's *Worldly Power* is a fascinating look inside the world of this influential newspaper, which he calls a "modern communications miracle." The miracle appears to be that the *Journal* managed to survive the many identity crises that plagued the early part of its life. The worker who gave the *Journal* its personality was Barney Kilgore, editor from 1940 until his early death from cancer in 1967. Kilgore took a trade paper with a short-sighted view of its mission and transformed it into a vehicle for some of the best reporting in the country.

The newspaper began as a sideline business to Dow Jones & Company's major interest, a ticker service. Editors had to bicker with the ticker manager for a fair share of the budget. The *Journal* was restrained under Charles Dow, who founded

it in 1889, and a bit bolder under the ownership of Clarence Walker Barron.

But it was Kilgore's arrival at the *Journal* that signalled its beginning as a great newspaper. Kilgore brought with him a midwestern sensibility that defined the *Journal*'s methodical approach to the lengthy features that Kilgore would make the newspaper's specialty. Hired as a reporter, Kilgore made a name for himself as an economics correspondent in the early years of Franklin Roosevelt's presidency. At a presidential press conference Roosevelt was asked about a Supreme Court decision on the National Industrial Recovery Act. "Read Kilgore," the president told the reporter.

The *Journal* was a direct beneficiary of Kilgore's excellence. His early, crude efforts at polling began to add weight to political campaign reporting. His ability to see beyond the daily minutiae to larger issues helped shape the *Journal*'s style. Yet he was an unassuming Hoosier from South Bend, Indiana, who was truly modest. Years after becoming editor, he would introduce himself socially as being "with the *Wall Street Journal*."

Scharff shows the young Kilgore as vigorously building the *Journal*, and the older Kilgore uncertain of what the newspaper had become. Kilgore's determination to experiment with a weekly national newspaper without reporters, *The National Observer*, drained much of his energies during the last years of his life. (The newspaper died a few years after he did.)

The *Journal* is an institution that has only in recent years -- because of the insider-trading scandal -- come under much scrutiny. Although books about the *Journal* were published before, the paper still seemed clouded in secrecy. Scharff's book, then, is a valuable history of this influential newspaper. It is in some ways to the *Journal* what Gay Talese's *The Kingdom and the Power* was to the New York *Times*. Scharff's writing is not as flashy as Talese's, and his sketches tend toward the thumbnail, rather than the mural-sized psychological portraits that Talese offered. But it is a readable, accurate, and thoroughly absorbing account of the rise of the *Wall Street Journal*.

William McKeen
University of Florida

The Paper. *By Richard Kluger*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986. 745 pp. Index. Cloth. $24.95.

Why read this many pages about a newspaper that went out of business twenty years ago?

1. For its perspective on journalism history. Subtitled "The Life and Death of the *New York Herald Tribune*," it is a rifle shot penetrating journalistic thought and practice from well before the founding of the *Tribune* in 1841 until well af-

ter the *Herald Tribune*'s demise in 1966. Its wealth of detail about a few publications and a few dozen journalists is a revealing contrast to the scattergun approach of journalism history textbooks.

2. For the inside story of a newspaper that, as much or more than any other, set the trends for those in this country and abroad that survived it. In graphic display and typography, in innovative broadening of subject matter, and in establishing new forms of journalistic writing, the *Trib* under the editorships of John Denson and James Bellows broke with its contemporaries and seems surprisingly modern in retrospect. Denson and Bellows made the changes for the same reason today's editors welcome change: the demands of competition and of a new kind of reader. (And they did it without computers.)

3. To sample the work of a writer who is a scholar. This is Kluger's second historical work. *Simple Justice* published in 1975 is the definitive work on the *Brown v. Board of Education* desegregation decision and the formation of the strategy that cracked legalized racial segregation in the United States. Both books are gems.

4. To look at the motivations of the *Trib*'s controlling publishers. The first, Horace Greeley, was addicted to journalism. Then came three generations of Reids. For them, the newspaper was the way to prestige and influence in America, New York City, and the Republican party. As such it had to be a quality product, and they were willing to bail it out financially to maintain it. The last, John Hay Whitney, after a false start set out to create a new and viable paper. Was he too late? Should he have made a greater commitment? Kluger offers some analysis but leaves the decisions to the reader. At the end he has a biting criticism of today's newspapers that leaves a hint that corporate chain ownership still misses a quality that newspaper families contribute to American journalism.

5. If none of the above suffices, for the *Trib*'s fascinating men and women. Here are some of the women: the Kansas farm girl who lost her voice but won fame in New York (Clementine Paddleford); the Barnard College graduate from Wisconsin who became a dowager's private secretary, married her son, and played as important a role in the *Trib*'s history as any man (Helen Rogers Reid); the literary editor who inspired Wendell Wilkie to run for president and write a great book (Irita Van Doren); the war correspondent who shared a jeep with one man and front-page space in the *Trib* with another, and a Pulitzer Prize with both (Marguerite Higgins, the *Trib*'s first woman reporter who became a friend of Eleanor Roosevelt and stayed with the paper for fifty-five years, to its very last issue (Emma Bugbee).

Harry Marsh
Kansas State University

Blacks and Media: A Selected, Annotated Bibliography, 1962-1982. *By J. William Snorgrass and Gloria T. Woody, eds.* Tallahassee: Florida A&M University Press, 1985. 150 pp. Index. Cloth.

Examining this book, one wonders why we've had to wait so many years for such a resource. That long wait casts some serious reflections, of course, on our profession's scholarship -- here's a field of research of immense importance to our rounding out the scope of U.S. history. And, also, to providing impetus and direction to the formulation of public policy involving integration of our society's media of mass communication and the elevation of their standards of professional practice. Yet, until now, we've had no published bibliography covering the field in this readily available form.

Snorgrass, an associate professor of journalism at Florida A&M University, and Woody, journalism librarian there, have made a most helpful contribution to the literature of mass communication. The bibliography's 743 items represent a quite good selection from sources including *Journalism Quarterly*, *Journal of Communication*, *Journal of Broadcasting*, *Columbia Journalism Review*, *Ebony*, and other obvious journals or professional periodical publications. Proper recognition is given the pioneering of Armistead Pride, Roland Wolseley, and Henry LaBrie III for their contributions -- bibliographic and other -- to our knowledge of black newspapers.

Absent, however, is recognition of the "White Racism, Blacks and Mass Communication" bibliography available from ERIC. That bibliography, which contains almost a thousand items of special relevance to the field, was compiled by Robert Roberts, journalism librarian at Temple University, and a former associate there. Available since 1979, the Temple bibliography was updated and expanded in 1982, when it was presented to the Minorities and Communication Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication for use as a resource for the development of courses and instruction in minorities and mass communication. Comparing the two bibliographies, one finds several difficult-to-understand omissions in Snorgrass/Woody.

Generally, however, Snorgrass/Woody covers the territory well enough.

Because scholars of national reputation neglected this field so long and the media generally were reluctant to get involved in black/white issues, one wonders, however, why Snorgrass and Woody restricted their bibliography to 1962-1982. That's a logical time frame, obviously, because it corresponds to our society's "black revolution" somewhat. Adding the earlier publications of major significance, however, would have created no great problem, since the field had been neglected so until the 1960s. Such an addition would have been of considerable help to today's historians.

The work, although it contains an alphabetical author/title index, needs a more sophisticated scheme of reference. In the book's present form, items are segregated on the basis of format (books, articles, etc.) and by kind of medium (press, ra-

dio/TV, etc.). The alphabetizing is by title, rather than author. The index, however, has all authors, as well as titles, listed. After each author's name is a series of numbers assigned to his or her contributions to the bibliography. What's lacking, in the book's organization, is a way to extract all the bibliography's items concerning some topic such as media stereotyping of blacks, affirmative action in the media, black ownership of media, or education of blacks for careers in the media.

Despite their book's limitations, however, Snorgrass and Woody have made a significant contribution to the literature of journalism's history. This reviewer hopes we'll see more of such research, as the result of their contribution.

John DeMott
Memphis State University

Gamaliel Bailey and Antislavery Union. *By Stanley Harrold.* Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1986. 301 pp.

Frank Luther Mott gave him one sentence in *American Journalism.* Allan Nevins mentioned him only four times in his two-volume *Ordeal of the Union.* But as South Carolina State College history professor Stanley Harrold has convincingly demonstrated, Gamaliel Bailey deserves greater recognition as an influential journalist and as a central character in the complex story of antislavery politics.

Harrold attributes Bailey's obscurity to the failure of previous efforts to complete Bailey's biography and to the loss of his personal papers. Yet, considerable Bailey correspondence does exist in the collections of other abolitionists, evidence in itself of Bailey's role in the antislavery period of 1835-1859, and his views on the major issues of the day are preserved in his published newspaper editorials.

From those sources, Harrold has developed his thesis that Bailey, newspapering from Cincinnati, hard against the northern border of the slave states, and later from Washington, D.C., "exerted a major influence on the development of the antislavery movement." Bailey's antislavery views were less radical than those of such New England contemporaries as William Lloyd Garrison and Gerrit Smith, but for twenty-five years he championed "immediate abolition."

His early reputation was established in Ohio through the *Philanthropist,* an organ of that state's Anti-Slavery Society. Cincinnati anti-abolitionist mobs contributed to his renown by twice destroying his press. Eventually his publishing enterprise included not only the weekly *Philanthropist,* with a peak circulation of 6,000, but a juvenile magazine, a monthly, and, finally, a daily. The daily was never a commercial success, but it ably promoted the new Liberty party.

Bailey believed that neither Whigs nor Democrats would ever take an anti-

slavery stand. Rather, he felt a new party was required to give individuals an abolition choice. Thus, he was a major player in the formation of the Liberty party, a loose coalition of antislavery factions.

To better promote the new party, Bailey left the *Philanthropist* in 1847 and established in Washington, D.C., the *National Era.* For more than ten years, the *Era* was *the* voice of antislavery in the federal capital and one of the most effective voices nationally. In only a few months, its circulation overtook that of the better known *Intelligencer* and *Union* and, in 1853, peaked at 28,000 when it published a new serial by Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* Bailey's participation, often behind the scenes, in antislavery politics peaked in 1854 when former Liberty men, Anti-Nebraska Whigs, Democrats, and Free Democrats caucused in Mrs. Cratchett's boarding house not far from the Capitol. Bailey was there. Years later Congressman Israel Washburn of Maine recalled that Bailey was "the immediate founder" of what became the Republican party.

Gamaliel Bailey and Antislavery Union is a good history. Harrold weaves his way through the complicated political alliances of the period with a steady sight always on his subject. Although Bailey's journalistic ventures are not the author's first concern, they are presented in careful detail. Historians owe Harrold a debt of gratitude for rediscovering this remarkable man.

Robert L. Hoskins
Arkansas State University

Reckless Disregard: Westmoreland v. CBS at al.; Sharon v. Time. *By Renate Adler.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986. 243 pp. $16.95.

Vietnam on Trial: Westmoreland vs. CBS. *By Bob Brewin and Sydney Shaw.* New York: Atheneum, 1987. 414 pp. $21.95.

Blood Libel: The Inside Story of General Ariel Sharon's History-Making Suit Against Time Magazine. *By Uri Dan.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987. 270 pp. $18.95.

Renate Adler's *Reckless Disregard* is about two major libel trials brought by well-known generals against the press which were held at the same time in the United States Courthouse on Foley Square in Manhattan in 1984-1985. General William C. Westmoreland sued CBS for its documentary "The Uncounted Enemy: A Vietnam Deception," broadcast on January 23, 1982. General Ariel Sharon of Israel brought charges against *Time* for its cover story on February 21, 1983, titled "Verdict on the Massacre."

Reckless Disregard has been as hotly contested as the two libel cases discussed

in the book. Adler became a party to the dispute about the trials, and a libel plaintiff in her own right. CBS and its law firm, Cravath Swaine & Moore, wrote a rebuttal to Adler's two-part series in *The New Yorker*, out of which the book is developed. As a result, Knopf postponed publication so that the text-could undergo legal review, and Adler charged harassment. Moreover, while completing *Reckless Disregard*, Adler was suing both Conde Nast and *The Washington Journalism Review* for libel.

Reckless Disregard makes no claim of being a dispassionate study of *Westmoreland v. CBS* and *Sharon v. Time*. Adler's polemic against what she considers the excesses of the press and the bar is grounded in her remarkably varied history as a writer. In 1962 she first joined the staff of *The New Yorker*, for which she reported extensively on national and international affairs. From 1968 to 1969 she had a brief but controversial tenure as film critic for the New York *Times*. Two autobiographical novels, *Speedboat* (1976) and *Pitch Dark* (1983), featured journalist-protagonists and thinly-veiled caricatures of well-known reporters. She also has published pointed critiques of the work of Bob Woodward and Paulene Kael, among others. Thus *Reckless Disregard* should be viewed as part of a larger body of Adler's work critical of the Fourth Estate.

She brings legal as well as journalistic credentials to her examination of the *Westmoreland* and *Sharon* trials. In 1974, when impeachment proceedings were being considered against President Nixon, she joined the staff of the House Judiciary Committee as a researcher and speech-writer. This experience led her to enroll at Yale Law School, from which she graduated in 1979.

In Adler's view both the *Westmoreland* and *Sharon* trials degenerated into a contest of "legal and journalistic shams" (61). She attributes this in large measure to the aggressive litigation style of Cravath Swaine & Moore, the prestigious law firm whose attorneys, David Boies and Thomas Barr, defended CBS and *Time*, respectively. Adler characterizes the Cravath approach to civil litigation as a game in which any tactics are acceptable, from provocation and intimidation to sophistic arguments and outright lies. She notes the irony that Cravath's stance impelled CBS and *Time* to disassociate themselves from responsible attempts they had both made to investigate errors on their part. Hence the subject of *Reckless Disregard* is as much what Adler calls "the cant of the libel bar" (71) as the practices of the press.

She sees an affinity between Cravath and its two media clients in that their reports on Westmoreland and Sharon reflected abuse of power and professional irresponsibility in the pursuit of truth and justice. She rejects the thesis of the CBS program that Westmoreland ordered a false ceiling on intelligence estimates of enemy troop strength. She is highly critical of George Crile, the program's producer, and his use of evidence. She also offers a revisionist interpretation of the outcome of the trial, widely considered a rout for Westmoreland caused by the testimony of General Joseph McChristian and Colonel Gains Hawkins. She argues that at the very moment Westmoreland's prospects were improving, his

inexperienced lawyer, Dan Burt, precipitously withdrew the suit.

Adler views Westmoreland and Sharon as victims of biased reporting. All now agree that *Time* erred in contending that Appendix B of the Kahan Commission report indicated that Sharon had discussed with the Gemayels the need for the Phalangists to take revenge for the assassination of Bashir Gemayel prior to the massacres in the Sabra and Shatile refugee camps. Adler demonstrates how David Haley, *Time*'s Jerusalem correspondent, righteously asserted his prerogative to shield anonymous sources to cover up his failure to ground his reporting firmly in fact. She provides a devastating portrait of his courtroom demeanor, of "his apparent readiness to say anything at all, as if factual matters were a thing of barter, or of haggling in a *souk*" (208).

Adler makes many telling points through painstaking examination of the trial records, including pre-trial depositions and sidebar conferences. She seems more interested in establishing internal inconsistencies in testimony than evoking the drama of the trials. On occasion she makes a witness come alive, and in a marvelous passage she describes the scene immediately following the end of the Westmoreland trial as "an American 8 1/2" (223). However, it is primarily Adler the lawyer rather than Adler the reporter or novelist we see at work.

Reckless Disregard can be viewed as a brief or manifesto directed against the mainstream press with only a secondary interest in the accusations lodged against Westmoreland and Sharon. Adler reveals the premise behind her book when she writes: "It could not ... have foreseen that in modern life it is the press itself that has, to a degree, become unitary, powerful and monolithic, suppressing the very diversity that it was the purpose of the First Amendment (and even of *Sullivan*) to protect" (242). For critiques of Adler's book, which dispute her characterization of Westmoreland and Sharon as victims of the press and place their trials in a broader political context, see John L. Hess' review in the November 29, 1986, issue of *The Nation* and Ronald Dworkin's essay in the February 26, 1987, issue of the *New York Review of Books*.

Vietnam on Trial: Westmoreland vs. CBS approaches the Westmoreland trial in a less critical and polemical spirit than *Reckless Disregard*. The book is written by the husband-and-wife team of Bob Brewin and Sydney Shaw, who have covered the media for the *Village Voice* and UPI, respectively. As the title of the book suggests, the authors focus on what the trial revealed about the war in Vietnam -- its character and legacy -- instead of using the court case as a vehicle to criticize the press and bar.

For Brewin and Shaw the trial was no sham, but a "uniquely democratic process" (vii). They provide a fascinating account of the genesis of the documentary and of the way the CBS personnel -- and CBS as an institution -- responded to the controversy it caused. *Vietnam on Trial* also details Westmoreland's response to the program. The book contains vivid portraits of the principal figures in this journalistic and legal drama, whom the authors interviewed extensively.

They seek to provide an even-handed account of the *Westmoreland* trial. They

sent a draft version of their book to all the major participants in the case to solicit comments and corrections. In some respects *Vietnam on Trial* lends weight to the judgments made by Adler. For example, both books characterize the appearance of the final witness in the trial, Colonel Hawkins, as a debacle for CBS which the press missed. However, as for the role of the press in the trial in general, the two books paint different pictures. Adler suggests that a monolithic, self-serving, pro-CBS press caused Dan Burt to panic and withdraw the suit as the tide was turning in Westmoreland's favor. It is a line of argument akin to the contention that the war in Vietnam was won on the battlefield but lost in the press. Brewin and Shaw demonstrate that CBS was roundly criticized by the members of the Fourth Estate for the shortcomings of "The Uncounted Enemy: A Vietnam Deception." Indeed, George Crile, producer of the program, complained bitterly to Brewin and Shaw about having the tables turned, and being victimized himself by the press.

That Sharon was a victim of the press, and righted the wrong in court, is the thesis of Uri Dan's *Blood Libel*. The book is an unabashed defense of the Israeli general's conduct. Dan, press attache to Sharon when he was Israel's Minister of Defense, attended the disputed meeting with the Gemayel family in 1982 at which the need for revenge was allegedly discussed. Dan draws us into the world of Israeli politics. The principal culprit in his eyes is *Time*'s correspondent, Daniel Halevy, an "ideologue cum journalist" (48) who had strong ties to the Israeli Labor Party. Dan chastises *Time* for failing to recognize the highly partisan nature of Israeli journalism and, like Adler, for refusing to acknowledge the error.

Dan gave a deposition and stood by Sharon's side during the course of the trial. He expresses satisfaction that the jury found *Time* guilty of the first two of three verdicts considered separately: defamation and falsity. Dan regrets that the jury absolved *Time* of the final verdict, actual malice. *Time* claimed vindication.

In the *Westmoreland* case as well as *Sharon* case, both plaintiffs and defendants claimed victory. The ability of all parties to take such a position testifies to the complexity and equivocal nature of American libel law. What, then, was resolved in these two costly and well-publicized trials? Unfortunately, none of these three otherwise interesting books uses the trials as case studies to reexamine *New York Times v. Sullivan.*

Ralph Engelman
Long Island University

Freda Kirchwey: A Woman of The Nation. *By Sara Alpern.* Cambridge, Mass., and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1987. 319 pp. $27.50.

Freda Kirchwey guided one of the country's most influential liberal periodicals,

The Nation, through almost half of the twentieth century. Oswald Harrison Villard hired her in 1918 to work in the magazine's new international relations section, made her its editor a year later, and advanced her to managing editor in 1922. In 1937 she bought the magazine, and she remained in control until she sold it in 1955.

This biography by Sara Alpern, of the Texas A&M Department of History, recounts in illuminating detail Kirchwey's early life as the daughter of reform-minded parents, her years at *The Nation*, and her struggles to reconcile the demands of career and family. Alpern had access not only to extensive manuscript collections accumulated by Kirchwey and members of her family but also to many of her professional associates, who usually admired her even while disagreeing with her political views. The author made good use of these resources.

Like many women who achieved career success in spite of societal prohibitions, Kirchwey had parents who encouraged her. Her father, whom she adored, served as dean of the Columbia Law School and founded the Society for International Law. Her mother, a teacher before illness forced her retirement, promoted dinner-table conversations about books.

Never questioning that she would work outside the home after graduation from Barnard College, Kirchwey found a reporting job with the New York *Morning Telegraph* in 1915, commuting from Princeton after her marriage to Evans Clark. She kept her maiden name, a statement of feminism. Both she and her husband believed that women could combine careers with families, and they held on to that view even through the deaths of two of their three sons and strained relations early in their marriage.

Kirchwey left the *Morning Telegraph* after a year, and two other short-lived jobs preceded her hiring in August 1918 by *The Nation*. With characteristic enthusiasm, she immediately began to champion such causes as birth control and social welfare legislation and to fight against fascism. She instituted frequent editorial forums, attracting notable writers from diverse fields, and never lost faith in the possibility of solving problems through calm and reasoned discourse. "Our job," she wrote, "is to keep our editorial position clear; and for the rest, to permit freedom of expression to a variety of left points of view. Our whole critical function would be sacrificed by a rigid coordination of opinion throughout this paper."

Alpern successfully relates Kirchwey's private life to her professional career but focuses on her ideas as they found expression in the pages of *The Nation*. For many years, she *was The Nation*. She saw it through the Spanish Civil War, the FDR years, the turmoil of World War II, the struggle for a Jewish homeland, and the McCarthy Communist hunts, then ushered it into the Atomic Age, facing one financial crisis after another. The author places Kirchwey and *The Nation* in the broad context of national and international politics, and one finishes the book with increased understanding not only of a major twentieth-century editor and her publication but of liberal political journalism and its inter-

action with historical developments of the twentieth century.

Sherilyn Cox Bennion
Humboldt State University

A Question of Sedition: The Federal Government's Investigation of the Black Press During World War II. *By Patrick S. Washburn.* New York: Oxford Press, 1986. $19.95.

In the aftermath of such highly politicized attorneys general as Edwin Meese, Ramsey Clark, John Mitchell, Bobby Kennedy, and A. Mitchell Palmer, it's refreshing to learn that not all of America's top legal officers permit politics, popularity, and pseudo-patriotism to dictate their responsibilities under and to the U.S. Constitution.

In particular, U.S. attorney general Francis Biddle comes out of Patrick Washburn's revisionist study as one of the great defenders of the libertarian approach to the First Amendment for his role in blocking efforts to censor the black press during World War II.

To do this, Biddle risked the ire of his Harvard classmate President Franklin Roosevelt as well as members of the cabinet and such journalists as Frank Knox, Byron Price, Walter Winchell, Westbrook Pegler, William Randolph Hearst, and even Walter Lippman. All of them were caught up in the bandwagon bearing down on minorities that not only included West Coast Japanese but the black press fighting for democracy at home as well as abroad.

Washburn's book, based on his doctoral dissertation from Indiana University, argues this overlooked aspect of media history with letters, documents, and interviews. They challenge Walter White's thesis that FDR put a stop to government efforts to muzzle the black press for criticising the hypocrisy that allowed blacks to go to war and fight and die on behalf of segregated America. The book also challenges the belief that the massive press suppressions of 1917-1921 did not recur during World War II because of an absence of dissent.

In contrast to the view of FDR protecting First Amendment rights, Washburn paints the president as overly concerned about "national security" and maintaining morale even if that meant violating the Constitution and trampling individual rights. The president was aided and abetted in his efforts by such in-house leaders as J. Edgar Hoover and such government agencies as the Post Office as well as most of journalism's elite who looked the other way because they believed "The Negro is Seeing Red" and was "Pro Axis."

Fortunately for the black press as well as other media dissenters, Biddle, a former secretary to Oliver Wendell Holmes, considered the most important role of the attorney general to be protecting individual rights instead of leading witch

hunts. "The ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade of ideas," Biddle believed. Partially because of his determination not to prosecute the critical black editors, the American Civil Liberties Union in 1945 noted that only thirty-three persons had violations sustained during the war for prosecutions involving speech and publications.

But Biddle isn't the only hero in Washburn's account. The black press also gets credit for its courage in reminding the government as well as other journalists and the public that criticism does not necessarily mean disloyalty. John H. Sengstackle, publisher of the Chicago *Defender* and founder of the Negro Newspaper Publishers Association, demonstrated his leadership on behalf of a free press in a confrontation in the spring of 1942. After that date the pressures on the black media dissipated even though the FBI -- with research that would later be used in the McCarthy era -- continued to agitate for prosecution. One Hoover report listed the Baltimore *Afro-American*, Amsterdam *Star-News*, *People's Voice*, Chicago *Defender*, Oklahoma City *Black Dispatch*, *Michigan Chronicle*, and Pittsburgh *Courier* as among the most-widely circulated and dangerous black papers.

Washburn's book is particularly timely as America continues its orgy of celebration of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. His account is important for those who forget how First Amendment rights are the first to fall during times of war unless we have more Biddles or gutsy black journalists around to stand up for us.

Historians will appreciate Washburn's abundant research and documentation achieved in part by sifting through thousands of documents declassified under the Freedom of Information Act as well as his use of interviews and popular magazines to give us a cultural sense of country and media. Washburn says the study is "negative history" or an account of something that did not occur. But it's something that historians need to be more aware of. In the words of Theodore M. White, "What does not happen is sometimes more significant than what does."

Alf Pratte
Brigham Young University

INDEX

Volume IV

Acquainted with the Night: The Image of Journalists in American Fiction, 1890-1930. Howard Good (rev. Thomas B. Connery), 4: 193-195.

Adler, Renate, *Reckless Disregard: Westmoreland v. CBS et al.; Sharon v. Time.* (rev. Ralph Engelman), 4: 211-214.

Alpern, Sara, *Freda Kirchwey: A Woman of The Nation.* (rev. Sherilyn Cox Bennion), 4: 213-216.

Altick, Richard D., *Deadly Encounters: Two Victorian Sensations.* (rev. Thomas B. Connery), 1: 48-50.

American Literary Magazines: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries. Edward E. Chielens (rev. Nancy Roberts), 4: 196-197.

American Television Drama: the Experimental Years. William Hawes (rev. William Horne), 4: 204-205.

Bannerman, R. LeRoy, *Norman Corwin and Radio: The Golden Years.* (rev. Ronald Garay), 3: 160-161.

Blacks and Media: A Selected, Annotated Bibliography, 1962-1982. J. William Snorgrass and Gloria T. Woody, eds. (rev. John DeMott), 4: 209-210.

Blanchard, Margaret A., *Exporting the First Amendment.* (rev. Jeremy Cohen), 4: 199-200.

Blood Libel: The Inside Story of General Ariel Sharon's History-Making Suit Against Time Magazine. Uri Dan (rev. Ralph Engelman), 4: 211-214.

Bolivia: Press and Revolution, 1932-1964. Jerry W. Knudson (rev. Joseph P. McKerns), 1: 43.

Blume, Keith, *Presidential Election Show: Campaign '84 and Beyond on the Nightly News.* (rev. Michael D. Murray), 4: 202-204.

Brewin, Bob, *Vietnam on Trial: Westmoreland vs. CBS.* (rev. Ralph Engelman), 4: 211-214.

Cain, James M., *60 Years of Journalism.* (rev. James S. Featherston) 3: 161-162.

"Charles Key Bruce: Early Journalist in India," (Basil L. Crapster), 4: 171-180.

Chielens, Edward E., *American Literary Magazines: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries.* (rev. Nancy Roberts), 4: 196-197.

Crapster, Basil, "Charles Key Bruce: Early Journalist in India," 4: 171-180.

Dan, Uri, *Blood Libel: The Inside Story of General Ariel Sharon's History-Making Suit Against Time Magazine.* (rev. Ralph Engelman), 4: 211-214.

Deadly Encounters: Two Victorian Sensations. Richard D. Altick (rev. Thomas B. Connery), 1: 48-50.

"Exchange System and the Development of American Politics in the 1820s," (Robert K. Stewart), 1: 30-42.

Exporting the First Amendment. Margaret A. Blanchard (rev. Jeremy Cohen), 4: 199-200.

"Fictional Techniques in the Journalism of David Graham Phillips," (Robert Miraldi), 4: 181-190.

Freda Kirchwey: A Woman of The Nation. Sara Alpern (rev. Sherilyn Cox Bennion), 4: 213-216.

Franklin of Philadelphia. Esmond Wright (rev. Theodore Conover), 4: 198-199.

Gamaliel Bailey and Antislavery Union. Stanley Harrold (rev. Robert L. Hoskins), 4: 210-211.

Good, Howard, *Acquainted with the Night: The Image of Journalists in American Fiction, 1890-1930.* (rev. Thomas B. Connery), 4: 193-195.

Good, Howard, "Image of Journalism

in American Poetry," 3: 123-132.

"Growing Interaction of the Federal Bureaucracy and the Press: The Case of a Postal Rule, 1879-1917," (Richard B. Kielbowicz), 1: 5-18.

Hawes, William, *American Television Drama: the Experimental Years.* (rev. William Horne), 4: 204-205.

Harrold, Stanley, *Gamaliel Bailey and Antislavery Union.* (rev. Robert L. Hoskins), 4: 210-211.

Hemmer, Joseph J., *Supreme Court and the First Amendment.* (rev. Nickieann Fleener), 4: 195-196.

Huey, Gary, *Rebel With a Cause: P.D. East, Southern Liberalism, and the Civil Rights Movement, 1953-1971.* (rev. James S. Featherston), 1: 44-45.

Humphrey, Carol Sue, "Producers of the 'Popular Engine'": New England's Revolutionary Newspaper Printers," 2: 97-117.

"Image of Journalism in American Poetry," (Howard Good), 3: 123-132.

Ingelhart, Louis Edward, *Press Freedoms: A Descriptive Calendar of Concepts, Interpretations, Events, and Court Actions, from 4000 B.C. to the Present.* (rev. Thomas A. Schwartz), 4: 192-193.

International News Services (A Twentieth Century Fund Report). Jonathan Fenby (rev. Kenneth Starck), 1: 45-46.

"James Fenimore Cooper and the Law of Libel in New York," (Richard Scheidenhelm), 1: 19-29.

Jordan, Myron K., "Presidential Health Reporting: The Eisenhower Watershed," 3: 147-158.

Kielbowicz, Richard B., "Growing Interaction of the Federal Bureaucracy and the Press: The Case of a Postal Rule, 1879-1917," 1: 5-18.

Kluger, Richard, *The Paper.* (rev. Harry Marsh), 4: 207-208.

Knudson, Jerry W., *Bolivia: Press and Revolution, 1932-1964.* (rev. Joseph P. McKerns), 1: 43.

Lang, Amy Schraeger, *Prophetic Woman: Anne Hutchinson and the Problem of Dissent in the Literature of New England.* (rev. Douglas Birkhead), 3: 159-160.

Lentz, Richard, "Resurrection of the Prophet: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the News Weeklies," 2: 59-81.

Letters to the Press. Arthur Conan Doyle (rev. Gary Whitby), 1: 46-48.

Magazines of the Americn South. Sam G. Riley (rev. S.M.W. Bass), 4: 191-192.

Miraldi, Robert, "Fictional Techniques in the Journalism of David Graham Phillips," 4: 181-190.

Newspapers of Maryland's Eastern Shore. Dickson J. Preston (rev. Sidney Kobre), 4: 200-201.

Norman Corwin and Radio: The Golden Years. R. LeRoy Bannerman (rev. Ronald Garay), 3: 160-161.

Olasky, Marvin N., "When World Views Collide: Journalists and the Great Monkey Trial," 3: 133-146.

Paper, The. Richard Kluger (rev. Harry Marsh), 4: 207-208.

"Party Press and Freedom of the Press, 1798-1808," (Wm. David Sloan), 2: 82-96.

Peck, Abe, *Uncovering the Sixties: The Life and Times of the Underground Press.* (rev. Ralph Engelman), 3: 163-165.

Presidential Election Show: Campaign '84 and Beyond on the Nightly News. Keith Blume (rev. Michael D. Murray), 4: 202-204.

"Presidential Health Reporting: The Eisenhower Watershed," (Myron K. Jordan), 3: 147-158.

Press Freedoms: A Descriptive Calendar of Concepts, Interpretations, Events, and Court Actions, from 4000 B.C. to the Present. Louis Edward Ingelhart (rev. Thomas A. Schwartz), 4: 192-193.

Preston, Dickson J., *Newspapers of Maryland's Eastern Shore.* (rev. Sidney Kobre), 4: 200-201.

"Producers of the 'Popular Engine'": New England's Revolutionary Newspaper Printers," (Carol Sue Humphrey), 2: 97-117.

Prophetic Woman: Anne Hutchinson and the Problem of Dissent in the Literature of New England. Amy Schrager Lang (rev. Douglas Birkhead), 3: 159-160.

Question of Sedition: The Federal Government's Investigation of the Black Press During World War II. Patrick S. Washburn (rev. Alf Pratte), 4: 216-217.

Rebel With a Cause: P.D. East, Southern Liberalism, and the Civil Rights Movement, 1953-1971. Gary Huey (rev. James S. Featherston), 1: 44-45.

Reckless Disregard: Westmoreland v. CBS et al.; Sharon v. Time. Renate Adler (rev. Ralph Engelman), 4: 211-214.

"Resurrection of the Prophet: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the News Weeklies," (Richard Lentz), 2: 59-81.

Riley, Sam G., *Magazines of the American South* (rev. S.M.W. Bass), 4: 191-192.

Satire & Society in Wilhelmine Germany: Kladderadtsch and Simplicissimus, 1890-1914. Ann Taylor Allen (rev. Peter Mellini), 1: 50-52.

Scharff, Edward, *Worldly Power: The Making of The Wall Street Journal.* (rev. William McKeen), 4: 206-207.

Scheidenhelm, Richard, "James Fenimore Cooper and the Law of Libel in New York," 1: 19-29.

Seldes, George, *Witness To A Century.* (rev. Frank J. Krompak), 4: 205-206.

Shaw, Sydney, *Vietnam on Trial: Westmoreland vs. CBS.* (rev. Ralph Engelman), 4: 211-214.

60 Years of Journalism. James M. Cain (rev. James S. Featherston) 3: 161-162.

Sloan, Wm. David, "Party Press and Freedom of the Press, 1798-1808," 2: 82-96.

Smiling Muse: Victoriana in the Comic Press. Jerold Savory and Patricia Marks (rev. Peter Mellini), 1: 50-52.

Snorgrass, J. William, *Blacks and Media: A Selected, Annotated Bibliography, 1962-1982.* (rev. John DeMott), 4: 209-210.

Stewart, Robert K., "Exchange System and the Development of American Politics in the 1820s," 1: 30-42.

Stoler, Peter, *War Against the Press: Politics, Pressure and Intimidation in the '80s.* (rev. Douglas Birkhead), 3: 162-163.

Supreme Court and the First Amendment. Joseph J. Hemmer (rev. Nickieann Fleener), 4: 195-196.

Uncovering the Sixties: The Life and Times of the Underground Press. Abe Peck (rev. Ralph Engelman), 3: 163-165.

Vietnam on Trial: Westmoreland vs. CBS. Bob Brewin and Sydney Shaw (rev. Ralph Engelman), 4: 211-214.

War Against the Press: Politics, Pressure and Intimidation in the '80s. Peter Stoler (rev. Douglas Birkhead), 3: 162-163.

Washburn, Patrick S., *Question of Sedition: The Federal Government's Investigation of the Black Press During World War II.* (rev. Alf Pratte), 4: 216-217.

"When World Views Collide: Journalists and the Great Monkey Trial," (Marvin N. Olasky), 3: 133-146.

Witness To A Century. Goerge Seldes (rev. Frank J. Krompak), 4: 205-206.

Woody, Gloria T., *Blacks and Media: A Selected, Annotated Bibliography, 1962-1982.* (rev. John DeMott), 4: 209-210.

Worldly Power: The Making of The Wall Street Journal. Edward Scharff (rev. William McKeen), 4: 206-207.

Wright, Esmond, *Franklin of Philadelphia.* (rev. Theodore Conover), 4: 198-199.

Library Subscription Form

American Journalism
School of Communication
P.O. Box 1482
University of Alabama
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

Please enter our subscription for____years of *American Journalism.*

_____Within territorial United States. Payment of $15.00 per year is enclosed.

_____ Outside United States by surface mail. Payment of $20.00 per year is enclosed.

_____ Outside United States by air mail. Payment of $25.00 per year is enclosed.

_____ Please bill us.

Address _____

Institution _____

City, State, Zip _____

Country _____

A limited number of back issues (Vol. I, No. 2; Vol. II, No. 2; Vol. III, No. 3; and Vol. IV, Nos. 1, 2 3, and 4) are available and may be ordered by writing *American Journalism* in the School of Communication at the University of Alabama. Please include payment of $4.00 per copy (includes $1.00 postage and handling) for orders within the United States. Surface mail orders from outside the U.S.A. should include $5.00 per issue; air mail orders from outside the U.S.A. should include $6.00 per issue.

For Volumes I and II, *American Journalism* was published twice yearly. Publication frequency became quarterly with Volume III.

American Journalism Historians Association

President: Thomas Connery, *St. Thomas*
Vice-President: Margaret Blanchard, *North Carolina*
Secretary: Don Avery, *Southern Mississippi*
Editor, *American Journalism*: Wm. David Sloan, *Alabama*

Board of Directors:

Roy Atwood, *Idaho*
Lester Carson, *Florida*
Charles Marler, *Abilene (Tex.) Christian*
Richard Scheidenhelm, *Attorney -at-Law*
Sharon Bass, *Kansas*
Barbara Cloud, *Nevada-Las Vegas*
Nancy Roberts, *Minnesota*
James D. Startt, *Valparaiso*
Leonard Teel, *Georgia State*

American Journalism
Department of Journalism
School of Communication
P.O. Box 1482
University of Alabama
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

Non-profit organization
U.S. postage paid
The University of Alabama
Permit No. 16